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GUILLAUME DE DOLE AND GUILLAUME DE NEVERS

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JEAN RENART's *Guillaume de Dole*¹ and an exemplum from the *Compilacio singularis exemplorum*² are the two oldest known versions of the large and widely diffused group of tales having this fundamental pattern: a girl unjustly accused of wanton conduct confounds her traducer by lodging against him a countercharge from which he can free himself only by an avowal which makes apparent the falsity of his slander.³ Madame Lejeune, the only scholar who has examined with any degree of thoroughness the relationship of the two pieces,⁴ appears to believe that the exemplum is but an adaptation of *Guillaume de Dole* itself. However, the two versions possess significant divergences, as well as close analogies; and,

since the compilers of exempla usually confined themselves to merely summarizing the worldly tales which they included in their collections and had no interest in altering them except to render them more adaptable to their edificatory and didactic purposes—which would definitely not be the effect of the exemplum's divergences from *Guillaume de Dole*—there can be no doubt that the exemplum, *Guillemus Nivernensis*, reproduces fairly faithfully the content of a lost vernacular romance, to which we may henceforth refer as "*Guillaume de Nevers*."

Gerbert de Montreuil must have known *Guillaume de Nevers* as well as *Guillaume de Dole*; for, while it is certain that he was influenced principally by the latter, it can hardly be a coincidence that the hero of the *Roman de la violette*⁵ is called "Gerart de Nevers," especially when we recall that the first part of this name, Gerart, is borrowed from the hero of Gerbert's main source, *Le Conte de Poitiers*.⁶ It follows that *Guillaume de Nevers* must have been current at about the same time as *Guillaume de Dole* and cannot, in any case, have been written much later.⁷

¹ Ed. G. Servois for the Société des anciens textes français (Paris, 1893); also Rita Lejeune (Paris, 1936).

² See J.-Th. Welter, *L'Exemplum dans la littérature religieuse et didactique au moyen âge* (Paris and Toulouse, 1927), pp. 236-44. Since the exemplum has never been published, its text, which is essential to proper intelligence of what follows, will be found appended to this article.

³ This group has generally been considered as a branch of the wager cycle. However, in a recent article (*MP*, XLIV [1946], 76-83) I have shown that the group in which the counteraccusation figures (Type I) was originally independent of the wager cycle, which it enters only as the result of contamination. For synopses of the members of the group, see G. Paris, "Le Cycle de la gageure," *Romania*, XXXII (1903), 486-98.

⁴ *L'Œuvre de Jean Renart* (Paris and Liège, 1935), p. 54-58.

⁵ Ed. D. L. Buffum for the Société des anciens textes français (Paris, 1928).

⁶ See *ibid.*, p. xlv.

⁷ Buffum fixes the date of *La Violette* at 1227-29 (pp. lv-lxxii), and this dating is generally accepted. The *terminus ad quem* for *Guillaume de Nevers* is, consequently, 1229.

So then, there was, more or less contemporaneous with *Guillaume de Dole*, another OFr romance which had essentially the same theme and whose content is preserved for us by the exemplum. Now the relationship between the two romances must have been one of these three: (1) *Guillaume de Nevers* was derived from *Guillaume de Dole*; (2) *Guillaume de Dole* was derived from *Guillaume de Nevers*; or (3) the two were derived from a common source. The arguments presented by Mme Lejeune in favor of the first relationship⁸ are not very cogent, since they are based on a premise which will be rejected immediately by every scholar experienced in following the development of literary themes. The original form of a story is by no means necessarily, as Mme Lejeune supposes, the most coherent and most perfectly motivated; coherence and logical motivation are the effects of the artistry of the narrator rather than of closeness to source and are even more likely to be found in later versions than in early ones. The relationship of our two romances will, consequently, bear further investigation.

In Renart's romance the emperor hears about, and becomes interested in, the heroine before the arrival of her brother at court. In fact, the brother's coming to court at all is the result of the emperor's interest in the girl. In this, *Guillaume de Dole* differs not only from *Guillaume de Nevers* but likewise from all the other members of the counteraccusation group. The latter concur with *Guillaume de Nevers* in having the emperor learn about the heroine from her brother, who is usually represented as having come to court in quest of advancement.⁹

This concurrence of the other versions with *Guillaume de Nevers* against *Guillaume de Dole* presents us with two pos-

sible alternatives: either Renart altered the original form of the tale, which would, in that case, be preserved in *Guillaume de Nevers* and the other versions; or *Guillaume de Dole* represents the original form, while *Guillaume de Nevers* and the other versions present a significant, common alteration. Obviously, if the alteration was practiced by Renart, *Guillaume de Dole* cannot be the source of *Guillaume de Nevers*. On the other hand, if *Guillaume de Dole* is the source of *Guillaume de Nevers*, the author of the latter must be responsible for the alteration, and all the other versions must descend from *Guillaume de Nevers*. While this last is, of course, possible, the other explanation seems, merely on the face of things, infinitely more probable.

Now if the other versions concur with *Guillaume de Nevers* against *Guillaume de Dole* in the matter that we have just discussed, there is another capital point upon which they concur with *Guillaume de Dole* against *Guillaume de Nevers*. This is the countercharge itself. In *Guillaume de Nevers* the heroine accuses the villain simply of having ravished her; but, in *Guillaume de Dole* and all the other versions except one,¹⁰ theft of a precious object forms the principal basis of her complaint. Since, then, each of the two ro-

⁸ In *Guillaume de Nevers* the brother leaves home at the urging of his sister, who wants to put an end to rumors of incest between them. Guillaume himself, however, knows nothing of the rumors, and his ostensible purpose in going to court is to emulate his father and make a name for himself. Although no trace of the rumors of incest is found elsewhere in the group and Mme Lejeune is quite correct in pointing out (p. 54) that they are unessential to the story, it is to be remarked that the brother sets off at his sister's urging in several other versions (see Paris, p. 498).

¹⁰ The exception is *Ysmaire de Voisines* (published by E. Langlois, *Nouvelles françaises du XV^e siècle* [Paris, 1908], pp. 1-7). As I have noted in my previous article (p. 81, n. 27), *Ysmaire* has been altered through the influence of Gerbert's *Violette* so that the villain sees with his own eyes the heroine and her birthmark, a feature which is entirely incompatible with the counteraccusation theme and which naturally entails alteration of the dénouement.

mances on occasion opposes the other and is supported in that opposition by the ensemble of the other versions, the only permissible conclusion is that each independently deviates from a common source and that neither, in consequence, can be derived from the other.

Inasmuch as *Guillaume de Nevers* was not modeled after *Guillaume de Dole* but had the same immediate source, the exemplum which preserves its content can help us to arrive at a better evaluation of Renart's creative powers and skill in handling his material by permitting us to identify in some measure the elements in *Guillaume de Dole* which the poet drew from his source and those which he developed from his own originality. Naturally, the abridged form of the exemplum and its obvious lacunae impose limitations, but we shall, nevertheless, be able to see to what extent Renart adhered to the essential framework of his source and to reach some conclusions.

We can begin by definitely dismissing Mme Lejeune's thesis that Jean Renart has combined in *Guillaume de Dole* two separate themes—that of "la princesse lointaine" and that of "la femme calomniée." By "la princesse lointaine" she means, of course, a man's being in love with a woman he has never seen.¹¹ This situation is indispensable to the counteraccusation type of tale and is found in all versions. If Mme Lejeune were correct in supposing that Renart was the first to join it to the theme of the slandered woman, he must also have invented the

counteraccusation. We know now, however, from *Guillaume de Nevers*, that both the counteraccusation and the emperor's falling in love with the heroine by hearsay were in Renart's source. Renart's originality lies, then, not in having introduced the "princesse lointaine" element but in having expanded it with his skilful depiction of the stages and the psychological processes involved in the development of the emperor's love for Liénor.¹² There is no need to evoke in this connection Jaufré Rudel or Gontier de Soignies, since, as Mme Lejeune herself points out (p. 53), Renart's treatment of the matter has nothing in common with theirs.

It is essential to the counteraccusation theme, as we have already remarked, that the emperor should form the desire to marry the heroine without having seen her. In Jean Renart's source, as in all versions except *Guillaume de Dole*, he must learn about her beauty and virtues from the brother.¹³ Renart was apparently dissatisfied with this feature of his model, possibly because it seemed impossible to him to develop the situation with a sufficient degree of verisimilitude, and so he invented the personage of Jouglet to arouse the emperor's interest in both the heroine and her brother. This is really Renart's major departure from his source. It entailed two others: making the action open at the emperor's court instead of at the home of the heroine with the departure of the brother and having the emperor summon the brother, instead of the latter's coming to court in quest of advancement. Apart from this, however, he appears to have hewed quite closely to the main lines of the source. We can definitely

¹¹ This theme is much more commonplace than Mme Lejeune supposes when she suggests that Renart was the first to have employed it in a tale or romance (p. 52). In French it had occurred notably in *La Prise d'Orange* and in *Tristan* (Marc and Iseut). It may be added that the "far princess" theme is always found combined with and secondary to some other action, since it lacks the substance necessary to form by itself the basis of a good tale, as anyone who has endured Rostand's play is aware (cf. G. Paris, *Hist. litt.*, XXX [1888], 152).

¹² See Mme Lejeune's very able analysis of this aspect of Renart's skill (pp. 38-42) and also her remarks on p. 53.

¹³ While the exemplum is not explicit on this point, it is evident that the emperor could have become interested in the girl only through the brother's account of her.

identify only two other deviations. The first of these concerns the person who reveals to the villain the secret of the heroine's birthmark. In *Guillaume de Nevers*, as in most of the other versions, a nurse or servant inadvertently performs the betrayal. *Guillaume de Dole* is unique in having the girl's mother cast in this role, a change which permits Renart to do some delicate character drawing.¹⁴ The only other deviation we can be sure of involves the circumstances under which the villain undertakes to dishonor the heroine. In *Guillaume de Dole* he takes it upon himself to visit the heroine without the emperor's knowledge, while in *Guillaume de Nevers* he sets out with a mission from the emperor to discover whether the girl is worthy of being empress. *Ysmarie de Voisines* and Lope de Rueda's *Eufemia*, which form with *Guillaume de Dole* and *Guillaume de Nevers* the oldest subgroup of the counteraccusation tales, concur with *Guillaume de Nevers* on this; and, if a number of the later versions do not, it is because they have undergone the influence of the wager tales.

There are, of course, other points, mostly minor, on which *Guillaume de Dole* differs from the exemplum, but for these the evidence of the other versions is insufficient to make clear whether it is *Guillaume de Dole* or *Guillaume de Nevers* that departs from the source. In some cases, however, there are grounds for a strong presumption. There is, for instance, the matter of the location of the emperor's court. In *Guillaume de Nevers* it is at Rome; in *Guillaume de Dole*, in Germany. In view of Renart's tendency to locate his action in familiar, rather than in distant, places,¹⁵ we may assume that it is he who made the change. This assumption is

strengthened by the consideration that *Guillaume de Dole* was written on the eve of Bouvines and that Renart, being in sympathy with Philip Augustus' enemies, undoubtedly seized upon the opportunity to present a German emperor in a favorable light.¹⁶

Among the points on which there is concurrence between the exemplum and *Guillaume de Dole*, the tournament episode is to be particularly noted. In both it serves the same purpose: the brother's prowess brings about crystallization of the emperor's decision to lay his project of marriage with the heroine before his council. Renart did not, then, invent the tournament, but it can hardly be doubted that his peopling it with contemporary celebrities was an original twist.

We are ready now, I think, for a general conclusion. As far as the main lines of plot are concerned, Renart adhered fairly closely to his source. He was by no means slavishly dependent upon it, however, and was quite capable of skilful and imaginative reorganization of his material when it seemed to him in need of improvement. But his originality really manifests itself best in details and in matters accessory to the plot. His source furnished him a canvas upon which he worked an exquisite embroidery of interpolated songs, idyllic scenes, characterizations, political digressions, psychological sketches, and realistic touches. These things, adequately discussed by Mme Lejeune, are peculiarly Renart's and distinguish him from all other writers of medieval romance.

There remains for us to present the text of the exemplum. Three manuscripts of the *Compilacio singularis* are known: Tours, No. 468; Berne, university library, No. 679; Upsala, university library, No. C 523. The Berne manuscript, however, is incomplete at the beginning and does not

¹⁴ Cf. Lejeune, p. 71.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 329. However, it must be recalled that part of the action of *L'Escoufle* takes place at Rome.

¹⁶ Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 58-68.

contain *Guillermus Nivernensis*. Our exemplum is included among the excerpts which Baluze copied from the Tours manuscript and may be found beginning on folio 169v of Volume LXXVII of the Fonds Baluze at the Bibliothèque Nationale.

The text below is that of the manuscript of Tours, in which it begins on folio 33v. The orthography of the manuscript has been preserved except that consonantal *u* and *i* have been represented by *v* and *j*. Where it has been necessary to make corrections, the reading of the manuscript is given in the footnotes.

GUILLERMUS NIVERNENSIS

Comes Nivernensis genuit filium et filiam, quo defuncto, filius, jam viginti annorum, nunquam loquebatur de uxore accipienda. Lingue male mencies dixerunt quod cum sorore sua dormiebat. Hoc ignorante juvene, puella intellexit et multum dolens cucurrit ad lacrimas et orationes ante beatam virginem. Inde cum fratre secreto conferens dixit:

"Pater meus et vester¹⁷ fuit miles egregius et devotus in curia regis et imperatoris, et novit arma et barones totius regni; vos autem non intenditis nisi ad talos, ludos et aves et venaciones. Hoc esset consilium meum: ut iretis ad imperatorem et offerretis ei servitium vestrum. Ego vero intrabo unum de castris vestris et ibi inclusa ero cum puellis meis, donec redeatis, ita quod nec exibo nec ad me vir intrabit."

"Et hoc jurabo," juvenis respondit, "omnia que dicitis michi placent praeter inclusionem vestram."

Et diu secum disputantes super hoc factum, juxta consilium puelle recessit Guillernus cum magno apparatu. Et Romam veniens, ab imperatore cum gau-

dio receptus est et super omnes juvenes in oculis imperatoris fuit graciosus.

Post longum tempus, audivit fore torneamentum; ibi congregari debebant omnes nobiles illius terre. Guillermus imperavit se iturum cum quodam magno de curia, quem Guillermus in armis sicut alii armigeri ita bene juvit in certamine quod ille victoriam super omnes optinuit. Et idem magnus totam victoriam probitati Guillermi ascribebat. Unde rediens, consuluit imperatori ne permetteret alias juvenem intrare torneamentum, ne ledere-tur, donec esset miles. Secutus est torneamentum; laudem omnium audacie et largitatis et pulchritudinis acquisivit. Unde imperator vocavit suum consilium et cepit laudare Guillermaum dicens:

"Si consulitis, accipiam in uxorem sororem ejus."

Marescallus in dolo respondit, qui autem major et fortior aliis dicebatur:

"Si sic valens miles est dominus Guillermus, quod de sorore sua non constat que et qualis. Si vobis placet, ego ibo et inquiram de ea, diu enim est quod proposueram peregrinare ad Sanctum Dyonisi-um."

Habebat et ipse sororem quam sperabat imperatori. Ivit ergo hic ut peregrinus, sed dolosus, et veniens ad castrum ubi erat puella, finxit se infirmum et fecit minui. Et exemia hospiti et uxori mittens, cepit inquerere de puella, qui omnia bona de pulchritudine, de moribus narraverunt ei. Et casu intravit nutrix puelle querens necessaria, ut pepla et capitegia et hujusmodi, que per manum¹⁸ hospite procura-bantur. Tunc ille maliciosus, assurgens illi nutrix, multum honoravit et, trahens eam in cameram, dedit ei anulum aureum valde bonum, rogans ut in castrum rediret ad ipsum consolendum quia infirmus erat. Illa attracta munere rediit, ac ille multa meliora dedit ita quod vetula frequenter

¹⁷ MS mater.

¹⁸ MS magnum.

redibat; et dicitur quod dormivit cum ea ut ipsa libentius rediret et secreta puella ab ea audiret. Rediit habens anulum parvum in digito valde pulchrum, quod extrahens, miles cepit inquerere cujus esset. Ait illa:

"Domina mea, quando lavit manus suas, tradidit michi, et est anulus quem dominus Guillermus, frater suus, dedit ei pro intersigniis in regressu."

Tunc ille, in digito tenens, noluit, et dedit ei tres meliores anulos dicens:

"Poteritis fingere quod admisistis, vel forte nunquam a vobis repetet." Et multis aliis jocalibus eam delinivit. Inquerens autem de statura, de moribus puelle, respondit:

"Non est pulchrior in mundo; a planta pedis usque ad verticem non est in ea macula nisi in dextro femore quasi quedam rosa, sed etiam numquam vidit aliquis nisi ego et dominus Guillermus quando puer erat et cum ea balneabam eum."

Inde recessit maliciosus et Romam rediit, et veniens imperatori dixit illam esse meretricem pessimam. Et dicebat:

"Ego dormivi cum ea et fui per tres noctes. Et dedit michi anulum istum quod pro intersigniis dederat ei dominus Guillermus. Et verum est quod pulcherrima est, ita quod non est in ea macula nisi quedam rosa in dextro femore."

Iratus imperator intravit ad prandium, et in mensa sederunt prope eum marescallus et dominus Guillermus in mensa edentes. Cum autem imperator incaluisset vino, ostendit anulum in digito marescalli et dixit:

"Guillermus, novisti anulum istum?" Quem aspiciens dominus Guillermus bene novi. Tacuit admirans. Tunc imperator:

"Illa meretrix, soror vestra, dedit marescallo qui dormivit cum ea et vidit rosam quam haberet in dextro femore."

Surrexerunt de mensa. Dominus Guil-

lermus ultra modum dolens festinavit ad hospitium et vocans unum armigerum ait:

"Sterne michi illum equum magnum et veni mecum ad campos ut videamus quomodo currit." Cum autem currerunt campos usque ad nemus, stetit Guillermus et ait:

"Redi et nuntia familie mee quod recedant et sciant quod de cetero non me videbunt: non possem sustinere istud obprobrium sororis mee."

Clamavit armiger et quantum potuit sociatus est eum, sed cito ab eo est elongatus ita quod eum admisit omnino. Rediens armiger, hoc nunciavit. Et cum dolore omnes ad terram suam redierunt, et veniens ad castrum ubi puella erat, hec omnia retulerunt.

Hoc audiens puella inconsolabiliter doluit et de fratre et de infamia sua; et cucurrit, ut solebat, ad cappellam et lacrimabilem orationem, maxime ad beatam virginem orationes fundebat. Surgens autem ab oratione, venit ad custodos suos dicens:

"Mortuus est frater meus; ego sum heres: oportet me habere curam de terra mea. Vocate omnes vasallos meos ut faciant michi homagium sicut debent."

Venerunt omnes et fecerunt ei sicut domine sue. Ipsa precepit fieri maximum apparatus equorum et fere cum centum equis, militibus, armigeris et puellis iter arripuit Roman, nemini revelans consilium cordis sui. Sed omnibus de familia prohibuit ne dicerunt que esset vel inde. Veniens autem ad imperatorem, prostravit se in faciem ejus clamans et plorans:

"Imperator, facias michi maturam justiciam!" Admirans autem imperator pulchritudinem ejus, levavit eam de terra promittens ei justiciam. Tunc illa:

"Conqueror de marescallo vestro qui me violenter oppressit et tenuit secum per tres noctes."

Vocatus autem marescallus, tunc eadem

verba cum flectu et clamore repetiit. Ille stupuit et mirans respondit:

"Nec istam mulierem nec vidi alias nec cognovi."

Illa multiplicans dicebat:

"Immo ita fecistis, quod parata sum probare per unum militem."

Cum autem diu jurans hoc negaret et illa duellum offerret, ille indignatus dixit:

"Et ego sum paratus deffendere me!"

Armantur inde marescallus et unus miles de militibus puelle. Armati venerunt ad jurandum super sacras reliquias. Primus jurat miles puelle sic:

"Juro quod dominam meam jus habet credo."¹⁹

Marescallus jurat:

¹⁹ Sic. Doubtless one should read: *jus habere credo*.

"Nec vidi alias dominam istam, nec cognovi gratis nec violenter, sic adjuvet me Deus et ista sancta!"

Tunc respiciens imperatorem, puella ait:

"Verum, immo verissimum, juravit marescallus: nec ipse nec alius dormivit mecum, et ego sum illa soror Guillermi quam falso crimine apud vos diffamavit sicut modo per suum juramentum modo probavit."

Imperator, admirans pulcritudinem et sapientiam puelle, ipsam cepit in uxorem. Vindictam accipiens de diffamatione marescalli, quesitus est dominus Guillelmus et inventus cum maximo gaudio rediit ad imperatorem.

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BLANCHE, DUCHESS OF LANCASTER

MARJORIE ANDERSON

DAUGHTER and wife, respectively, of two of the most powerful nobles of fourteenth-century England, daughter-in-law of one king and mother of another, Blanche of Lancaster is known to the modern world mainly because two poets, Chaucer and Froissart, were inspired to write of her beauty and her virtues. If proof were needed of the power of the pen, the case of Blanche would be a good one in point. No independent account of her appears in the *Dictionary of national biography* or in the *Britannica*; history seems to have relegated her to a very minor position; yet she was a person of high distinction and the inspiration for what has been called "one of the most perfect portraits of a woman that was ever drawn." It has seemed to the present writer fitting that the few facts known about her should be assembled so that the Blanche of the Chronicles and the Rolls might appear beside Chaucer's "gode, faire White" as a historical figure.

One reason for the paucity of biographical material about Blanche is that she died young, at the age of twenty-nine or possibly twenty-seven. Her name does appear, however, from time to time in the various official records of the period; and on these records and the early chronicles the following biographical sketch is mainly based.

Blanche was the second daughter of Henry, the first duke of Lancaster, and Isabel, daughter of Henry, Lord Beaumont. She and her older sister, Maud, were the duke's only children and joint heirs.² The date of her birth cannot be

stated exactly, but it lies probably within the years 1340-42. The various post-mortem inquests of her father and sister are the only places I have been able to discover where her age is mentioned, and these vary considerably. Only two of them give a specific date: in these she is said to be nineteen "at the Annunciation last," that is, March 25, 1361. The majority of them, however, describe her as "21 and more" in that year.³

There are no records of her life before her marriage in 1359, with one exception. She was contracted to marry, on May 3, 1347, John de Segrave⁴—a child betrothal which came to naught. Blanche, however, grew up in an atmosphere of greatness. Her father was noted for his military prowess (the list of his campaigns, as was pointed out long ago by Professor Cook, reads like that of Chaucer's Knight) but even more for his piety and charity, which gained for him the title "the Good." He was the founder of many monasteries, churches, and hospitals, a man given to prayer, abstinence, and almsgiving. "His eyes could not behold a poor person and pass him unrelieved." The same chronicler, John Capgrave, describes him as one who

from his earliest years excelling in good manners, always having the Lord before his eyes, in the fear of Whom he was brought up in youth, never turned back from his commandments; as a man he was esteemed temperate in all things; and his language, compact yet

¹ James R. Lowell, *Conversations on some of the old poets* (Cambridge, Mass., 1845), p. 98.

² William Dugdale, *Baronage of England* (London, 1675), I, 789; G. E. Cockayne, *Complete peerage* (London, 1887), VII, 378.

[MODERN PHILOLOGY, February, 1948]

³ *Calendar of inquisitions post mortem* (London, 1935), Vol. XI, Nos. 118 and 299. The name and age of Blanche are given twenty-six times in the various inquisitions pertaining to her father and eleven times in those of her sister. The age given by Froissart is obviously incorrect.

⁴ *Berkeley Castle deeds*, ed. Jeayes, No. 519; quoted in Cockayne, VII, 410.

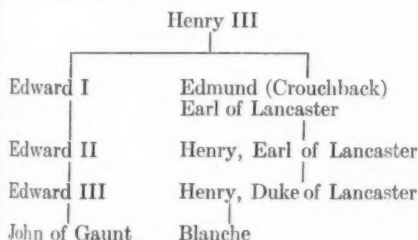
ornate, admitted of no kind of adulation or of deceit.⁵

With due allowance for exaggeration, it is clear that the Lady Blanche had before her in her youth an example of goodly living within her own family, an example which she tried to follow.

The first important date in her life which has been chronicled is Sunday, May 19, 1359, the day of her marriage at Reading (Berks.) to John of Gaunt, the earl of Richmond, fourth son of Edward III, then nineteen years of age:

Anno millesimo trecentesimo quinquagesimo nono, quarto decimo Kalendas Junii, Dominus Johannes de Gaunt, filius Regis Edwardi, Comes Richemond, Blanchiam, filiam Domini Henrici, Ducis Lankastriae, consanguineam suam de dispensatione Curiae, apud Radinggum, duxit uxorem.⁶

The papal dispensation mentioned above was necessary because John and Blanche were third cousins, a relationship which can be most easily seen in an abridged genealogical table:



⁵ *Book of the illustrious Henries*, trans. Rev. F. C. Hingston ("Gt. Britain Public Record Office chronicles and memorials," VII, 186, 190); see also Joshua Barnes, *History of Edward III* (Cambridge, 1688), p. 617.

⁶ Thomas Walsingham, *Ypodigma neustriacae*, ed. Henry T. Riley ("Chronicles and memorials of Gt. Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages," XXVIII, 302); see also *Chronicon Angliae* (ibid., LXIV, 39); Gray, *Scalacronica* (Glasgow, 1907), p. 168; Capgrave, VII, 191; Dugdale, I, 789; Cockayne, VII, 378, 411; Barnes, p. 564; Mary Bateson (ed.), *Records of the borough of Leicester* (London, 1901), II, 125.

Edward III petitioned Pope Innocent VI for such dispensation, which was granted 8 Ides January, 1359, at Avignon.⁷

The wedding was accompanied by great festivities. According to tradition, a week after it took place, an elaborate tournament was held in London in the presence of the kings of France and Scotland, in which the Lord Mayor of London, two sheriffs, and twenty-one aldermen were the challengers. Unknown to the public, their places were taken by King Edward and his four sons, Edward, Lionel, John, and Edmund, and nineteen other nobles bearing the city arms on their shields and fighting so valorously that they held the field for three days against all comers,

especially to the satisfaction of the Citizens, while they took them really for what they seem'd; but they were extreemly ravish'd with joy, when they understood that the King himself and his Children had done them the Honour to fight so gallantly under their Cognisance.⁸

Edward's fondness for tournaments is well known, so that he undoubtedly welcomed this occasion for taking part in one. He also honored his new daughter-in-law in a more tangible way by gifts of jewels and plate, among them a ruby ring, a belt ornamented with rubies, emeralds, and pearls, a tripod and cup of silver gilt, and two silver buckles, the latter being purchased for his daughter Isabella to give to the new countess of Richmond.⁹

All in all, it was a brilliant wedding, and it was indeed to prove a most fortunate marriage. Its happiness in personal terms I shall speak of later. The wealth and

⁷ *Calendar of entries in the papal registers relating to Gt. Britain and Ireland*, ed. Bliss, Johnson, and Twemlow (London, 1897), III, 605.

⁸ Barnes, p. 564, quoting Holinshed; see also Sidney Armitage-Smith, *John of Gaunt* (London, 1904), p. 15, n. 2.

⁹ *Issues of the exchequer . . . from Henry III to Henry VI*, trans. Frederick Devon (London, 1837), pp. 170, 172-73.

power which it brought to John of Gaunt were destined to have lasting effects upon the history of England; within three years, because of it, John found himself owner of one of the greatest titles and domains in the country.

Henry, the "Good Duke," Blanche's father, died of the plague on "Tuesday before Annunciation" (March 23), 1361, leaving as his sole heirs his two daughters, Maud (Matilda) and Blanche.¹⁰ Maud, at the time of her father's death, was married to William, duke of Bavaria, count of Hainaut, Zeeland, and Holland, son of the Emperor Lewis of Bavaria, with whom she lived, according to one of the post-mortem inquisitions, "in parts beyond the sea without returning to England, for which reasons the jurors do not know whether she is living or has a living heir of her body or not."¹¹ This ignorance was soon corrected, for by July 16 of that year there are records relating to the division of Henry's property between his two daughters by mutual consent. Without going into unnecessary detail, it may be said that the main part of Maud's lands lay in the west, in Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, and the March of Wales, while Blanche and John received their chief property in Lancashire, Nottinghamshire, and Staffordshire.¹²

This division, however, was shortly to prove unnecessary, for Maud, who had come over to England after her father's death, likewise fell a victim to the plague on Palm Sunday of the following year, April 10, 1362.¹³ Since she had no children, her sole heir was Blanche and,

through her, John, to whom, therefore, came all the vast property of Henry of Lancaster, including, to name only a few of the most important possessions, the "castle, manor and honor" of Leicester, formerly part of Maud's holdings; the castle and manor of Kenilworth; the castle, town, and manor of Pontefract; the castle and honor of Lancaster; the castle of Bolingbroke, the castle, town, and lordship of Monmouth; and the castle of Carmarthen.¹⁴

The acquisition of such great wealth did not go completely unchallenged. The death of Maud seemed too opportune a coincidence to some, and there were rumors that Maud had been poisoned, "that the Inheritance might not be divided among Foreigners."¹⁵ The main written authority for this statement is the chronicler Henry Knighton, "the staunch partisan of the old House of Lancaster,"¹⁶ who remarks concerning the death of Maud: "quam vulgaris opinio decebat veneno intoxicatam propter haereditatem reintegrandam."¹⁷ Whether there were any grounds for this belief or not (other chroniclers do not mention it), no blame seems in any way to have been attached to Blanche, whose connection with such a crime is at complete variance with everything else we know of her.

The records of Blanche's life other than those relating to her marriage and death are connected chiefly with property and with religious and charitable matters. The property transfers resulting from her inheritance have already been mentioned.

¹⁰ *Calendar of inquisitions post mortem*, Vol. XI, Nos. 118, 299; *Calendar of the fine rolls* (London, 1923), Vol. VII, memb. 20, pp. 219-20; *Calendar of the patent rolls* (London, 1911), Vol. XII, memb. 17, p. 118.

¹¹ Barnes, p. 617, based on Knighton's *Chronicle*.

¹² Sir James Ramsay, *Genesis of Lancaster* (Oxford, 1913), I, 466, n. 1.

¹³ Henrici Knighton, *Chronica de eventibus Angliae*, ed. Sir Roger Twysden ("Historiae Anglicanae scriptores," Vol. X [London, 1652]), II, 2626.

¹⁰ *Calendar of inquisitions post mortem*, Vol. XI, No. 118.

¹¹ *Calendar of inquisitions post mortem*, Vol. XI, No. 118 (April 25, 35 Edward III); see also Bateson, II, 125.

¹² *Calendar of the closed rolls* (London, 1909), XI, memb. 19, pp. 202-11.

¹³ *Calendar of inquisitions post mortem*, Vol. XI, No. 299; Cockayne, VII, 411.

¹⁵ Bateson, p. 490. O
volving B
XII, 250;
rolls, XII,
280, 419.

One other feature of her inheritance may be added. When she and John first took possession of their property at Leicester, the townspeople welcomed them with gifts, such voluntary offerings "being made by the assent of the community of the town."¹⁸ Among other references to property, mention may be made of a grant (August 28, 1359) "to the king's daughter, Blanche, Countess of Richmond, of 100 £ yearly at the exchequer towards the expenses of her chamber,"¹⁹ and of an order (May 15, 1363) to the escheator in Yorkshire to deliver to John and Blanche "as the right of Blanche," the manor of Sneyth, which Queen Philippa had wrongly claimed to "hold in dower." The queen is ordered "not to intermeddle further with the said manor."²⁰

The religious and charitable side of Blanche's life may be best seen in the numerous petitions made by her and her husband to the pope. There are two requests for a portable altar for them and their household, each of which was granted (Avignon, 4 Ides January, 1359, and 16 Kal. March, 1363). A petition "that their chaplain may hear their confessions and those of their household and minister to them the sacraments" and one that "religious may eat meat in their house or presence" were likewise granted (Avignon, 9 Kal. June, 1363). Two other petitions made in 1366 were granted, one for "plenary remission at the hour of death" and the other for "leave to change as well as to choose their confessors" (Avignon, 6 Kal. July, 1366). Various papal grants were made at the requests of John and Blanche on behalf of other

people. They were successful in obtaining a portable altar for their kinsman, Henry Percy; a dispensation that the marriage of Robert Urswik and Margery, "who intermarried in ignorance of their relationship in the third degree," be allowed and their offspring be legitimate; the canonry of Howden "with expectation of a prebend" for "a member of their household," William Dudeman, "scholar in arts," and the same for Adred Foljambe, "scholar of civil law"; a dispensation for William Basy, "already dispensed on account of illegitimacy" to "exchange his benefice"; a benefice valued at 50 marks for John Wodhulle, M.A., in the gift of the bishop, prior, and chapter of Ely; a dispensation for John Wauncy, Carmelite, master in theology, "on account of illegitimacy, that he may be promoted to all offices and dignities of his order"; a canonry of York for John de Lincoln, their treasurer, "with expectation of a prebend"; and the same at Salisbury for their chancellor, William de Sutton.²¹

There are also records of requests made to the king on behalf of others. In 1366 Edward confirmed a grant made by John to Ingelram Fauconer (Falconar) and Amy his wife for "good service to the duke and his consort of 10£ yearly for life"; and in 1367 the king at the request of Blanche granted a pardon to John Bulleson, who was accused of killing Robert of Pullowe, alias Robert Dauson.²²

These numerous petitions are evidence of the religious inclination of Blanche and of her interest in helping others, particularly those of her own household. They give one the impression of a kindly woman, thoughtful of the welfare of her dependents.

During her ten years of married life,

²¹ "Petitions to the pope" in *Calendar of entries in the papal registers* (London, 1897), I, 337, 401, 422, 423, 528-29.

²² *Calendar of the patent rolls*, XIII, 260, 327-28.

¹⁸ Bateson, II, 131.

¹⁹ *Calendar of the patent rolls*, XI, 265.

²⁰ *Calendar of the closed rolls*, Vol. XI, memb. 11, p. 490. Other references to property transactions involving Blanche may be found in XI, 401-2, 418, 481; XII, 250; XIII, 139; and in the *Calendar of the patent rolls*, XII, 387, 434; XIII, 50, 53, 57, 90, 177, 248-49, 260, 419.

Blanche was the mother of five children, two of whom, John and Edward, died in infancy. Of the other three, the only surviving son, Henry (b. 1366), became king as Henry IV; Philippa (b. 1360) married João I of Portugal; the second daughter, Elizabeth (b. 1364?), had a notorious marital career, marrying John Hastings, earl of Pembroke, eloping with John Holland, earl of Huntingdon and duke of Exeter, whom she later married, and having as a third husband John Cornwall, baron of Fanhope.²³

On June 1, 1367, Ingelram Fauconer (the same one to whom a grant had been given in the preceding year for good service) received a gift from King Edward for bringing to him "letters from the Duchess of Lancaster with news of the birth of a son of the same Duchess."²⁴ This son is probably Edward, who died in infancy. The tentative date of his birth is given by Armitage-Smith as 1368 (table, p. 94); but, unless this is a sixth child, that date should be amended to 1367.

Blanche's early death prevented her from having any great influence on the lives of her children. If she had lived, possibly Elizabeth would not have had such a notorious career.

The last statement is, of course, conjecture. One may, I think, indulge in a little more conjecture regarding Blanche's life by considering very briefly her husband's career during these ten years (1359-69). Some of it was spent in warfare, in which Blanche would have had no part. There is no record of her accompanying him on any of his campaigns as was the case with Queen Philippa and King Edward. John was fighting in France in 1359-60 shortly after his marriage; in Spain in 1366-67; and again in France in 1369 at the time of Blanche's death. Aside from his military

activity, he was in the parliaments of 1360, 1365, and 1366 and was sent on a diplomatic mission to Flanders in 1364. Blanche probably had little to do with this part of her husband's life either; but, when we come to an account of his social activities, it seems legitimate to indulge in a few assumptions.²⁵

The Peace of Bretigny in 1360 had given England military ascendancy. Knights from all European countries came to her shores. Tournaments and jousts between these foreigners and their English hosts were the order of the day. It was a time of rejoicing and one which the pleasure-loving king prolonged as much as possible. In 1363 there were three kings at Edward's court—Waldemar III of Denmark; David, king of the Scots; and Pierre de Lusignan, king of Cyprus,²⁶ whose death is the material for one of the "tragedies" of the *Monk's tale*. These were joined the next year by King John of France, returning to his captivity after the broken parole of the duke of Anjou. It was a gay court, and one of its chief hosts was the duke of Lancaster, at whose luxurious palace, the Savoy, the "fairest palace in the realm," the kings were guests. It was, in fact, at the Savoy on April 8, 1364, that King John died.²⁷

Where the duke was host, surely the duchess was hostess. It must have been in these surroundings, in the house which her father had rebuilt and "filled with all the precious things which fourteenth-century luxury could afford,"²⁸ that Blanche was most often seen and admired by Chaucer and Froissart. Chaucer may even have been a member of the duke's household at this time.²⁹ Both men have left testimonies of their esteem, Froissart in a few lines of

²³ These few facts about John are based on Armitage-Smith, chaps. II, III, and IV.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 28; see also Ramsay, I, 458-59.

²⁶ Armitage-Smith, p. 28.

²⁷ John M. Manly, *Canterbury tales* (New York, 1928), p. 11.

²³ Armitage-Smith, p. 94 (table); Cockayne, VII, 411.

²⁴ *Issues of the Exchequer . . . from Henry III to Henry VI*, p. 191.

²⁵ Quoted (Oxford, 1911) as mere guess.

²⁶ Armitage-Smith, the date of p. 65; Walsingham's *Paul's Cross*.

²⁷ Dugdale, see also Walsingham, p. 11.

his *Le joli buisson de jonece* and Chaucer in the *Book of the duchess*. Another poem of Chaucer's may have been written for her although not about her, his *A.B.C.*, a translation of the *Pélerinage de la vie humaine* by Guillaume de Deguilleville, which, according to Speght in his 1602 edition, was "made, as some say, at the Request of Blanch, Duchesse of Lancaster, as a praier for her priuat use, being a woman in her religion very deuout."³⁰

The gay scene lasted only a few years for the duchess. In 1369 the Black Death struck again, and this time Blanche succumbed to the plague, which only a comparatively few years before had killed her father and sister. The war with France had reopened in 1369, and John of Gaunt had been sent to Calais in July with a small army. On September 12 the English and French armies lay facing each other, the English, who were outnumbered, expecting an attack, when, to their surprise, the great fires seen in the French camp proved to be a sign of the French departure. On that very day—September 12—Blanche died. The news of her death did not, however, reach John until he returned home from his campaign in November, when he discovered his double loss, for his mother, Queen Philippa, had died a month before his wife.³¹

Blanche was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral "on the North side of the Quire."³² Here her husband had a tomb of alabaster made, adorned with an alabaster image of Blanche. Beside her tomb he ordered an altar to be erected, furnished with a missal and a chalice, at which two chaplains, at a

salary of £20 a year, were to sing masses for her soul.³³

In addition to this chantry, John ordered each anniversary of Blanche's death, September 12, to be celebrated, a custom continued by her son, Henry IV.³⁴ Such an anniversary commemoration of the dead was fairly common in the Middle Ages. In the case of Blanche we have ample record of these services in the Duke's *Register*, where the costs varied from £45 to £10. The service consisted of a solemn High Mass at St. Paul's, the cathedral being draped with black and the tomb being surrounded by twenty-four poor men wearing gowns and hoods of white and blue, the Lancastrian colors, and holding burning torches. Alms were distributed to the poor, and two collations were served, wine and sweetmeats to the chapter of St. Paul's after vespers on the eve of the anniversary and supper at the Savoy either on the eve or the day of the anniversary. The celebration in 1374 was probably the first at which John was present in person, as he had not been in England on the previous dates.³⁵

In his will John ordered that he be buried in St. Paul's near the main altar beside his "very dear" wife Blanche:

En primes jeo devise . . . mon corps a estre ensevelez en l'eglise cathedrale de Saint Poule de Londres, pres de l'autier principale de mesme l'esglise, juxte ma treschère jadyz compaigne Blanch illecoq's enterre.³⁶

This tomb was unfortunately destroyed in the time of Edward VI or Elizabeth.³⁷

³⁰ John of Gaunt's register, ed. Sidney Armitage-Smith (London, 1911), Nos. 1394, 918, 1091. Gifts of vestments for the chaplains are mentioned in No. 915.

³¹ *Ibid.*, No. 1585; Dugdale, *History of St. Paul's Cathedral*, p. 37; Armitage-Smith, *John of Gaunt*, pp. 77, 78 n.

³² N. B. Lewis, "Anniversary service for Blanche, Duchess of Lancaster, 12 September, 1374," *John Rylands Library Bulletin*, XXI (April, 1937), 176-92.

³³ From Testament of John, duke of Lancaster, in Armitage-Smith, *John of Gaunt*, p. 420.

³⁷ Dugdale, *History of St. Paul's Cathedral*, p. 47.

³⁰ Quoted by Skeat, *Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (Oxford, 1899), I, 59. Skeat considers this "probably a mere guess" but "just possible."

³¹ Armitage-Smith, pp. 72-75; Barnes, p. 782. For the date of Blanche's death see also *Chronicon Angliae*, p. 65; Walsingham, p. 315; Dugdale, *History of St. Paul's Cathedral in London* (London, 1658), p. 38.

³² Dugdale, *History of St. Paul's Cathedral*, p. 47; see also Walsingham, p. 315; *Chronicon Angliae*, p. 65; Barnes, p. 782.

If the image of her on the tomb had survived, it would have been a great help to all readers of Chaucer's *Book of the duchess*, for we should have known, then, approximately what Blanche looked like. As it is, there is some doubt. Chaucer in his poem gives a very detailed portrait of the lady. Her hair was neither red, yellow, nor brown, but golden in color; her eyes were not too wide but well set and full of expression, with a direct, not an oblique, glance and a look of mercy in them; her face, beautiful beyond the power of description, was ruddy, fresh, "lyvely hewed," full of beauty and kindness; her neck was fair and flawless, smooth, straight, showing no collar bone, her throat like a round tower of ivory; she was tall, had fair shoulders, fleshy arms, white hands with red nails, round breasts, broad hips, and a straight flat back.³⁸ It seems like a realistic portrait of a known individual; certainly, the conventional heroine of the romances did not have broad hips and fleshy arms. It was therefore a surprise when Kittredge pointed out in detail some years ago (1909, 1915) what Tyrwhitt had surmised long before him, that practically the whole description, including the most unconventional parts, is based upon two of Machaut's poems, *Le Jugement dou roy de Behaingne* and *Le Remède de fortune*, particularly the former.³⁹

In spite of this fairly close imitation on Chaucer's part, the Black Knight's lady is a very real person; and it seems unbelievable that Chaucer would have described Blanche as tall and somewhat stout if she had not been so in real life. Perhaps it was because Machaut's description fitted Blanche so well that

Chaucer used it. I feel we are safe in thinking that Chaucer's poem gives us a fairly close picture of the duchess.

So far we have spoken only of Blanche's physical appearance. Chaucer's elegy tells us much more about his heroine than that. Her good qualities are so numerous that it is no wonder that all who saw her loved her. Here again some of the description is taken from Machaut and represents a court poet's tribute. She had the accomplishments of the court ladies of the day: she could dance, sing, and play on musical instruments. Her social brilliance is emphasized by comparing her to a torch which can give light to others without diminishing its own, to a mirror, and to a precious gem (a company without her was like a crown without stones).⁴⁰ Her "goodly, softe speche" was eloquent; it was based on reason and was never malicious or harmful. She was not given to flattery.

There are other elements in the portrait, however, not found in Chaucer's sources, and these would seem to constitute the basis for our estimate of the real Blanche. Four main traits of character emerge from Chaucer's description: uprightness, moderation, reasonableness, and a friendly spirit.

Blanche's goodness was so obvious that it shone forth in her face. Hers, however, was no cloistered virtue. She knew what evil was or she could not have been so good, Chaucer thinks, and her knowledge of the world sometimes softened her judgments. Her love of the right kept her from wronging any man, but, in return, her self-respect would allow no ill behavior toward herself. So marked was her probity of character

That Trouthe hymself, over al and al
Had chose hys maner principal
In hir, that was his restyng place [ll. 1003-5].

⁴⁰ This last comparison is not in Chaucer's sources.

³⁸ *Book of the duchess*, ll. 855-76, 894-917, 938-59.

³⁹ G. L. Kittredge, "Chauceriana—Booke of the duchesse and Guillaume de Machaut," *MP*, VII (1909-10), 465-69; and "Guillaume de Machaut and the Booke of the duchesse," *PMLA*, XXX (1915), 1-24. Tyrwhitt's statement, quoted by Kittredge, is to be found in his *Canterbury tales* (1775), III, 312-13.

⁴¹ The
in ll. 875-
988-1023.

⁴² *Le j*
lady refer
Philippa.

Her goodness was not the kind that always wears a long face; instead Blanche followed the golden mean by being neither too "sober" nor too "glad." "Dulness," says Chaucer, "was of hir adrad." She was temperate and tolerant in her judgments.

This temperance is part of the reasonableness of her character. She was entirely lacking in the capricious cruelty of those ladies who sent men on foolish and dangerous quests merely to satisfy their own vanity, nor did she enjoy keeping people in suspense or luring them on with false promises.

Her friendly spirit showed itself in most of her actions. She loved good people and was eager to manifest a brotherly spirit toward all who were worthy of it.⁴¹

Altogether it is a charming portrait, and, with due allowance for a court poet's desire to please a patron, it has a ring of truth in it which makes one recognize the innate fineness of the duchess' character. One feels that in truth

She used gladly to do wel [l. 1013].

Froissart's tribute to Blanche is much shorter, but it seems equally sincere and, like Chaucer's poem, praises her goodness:

Aussi sa fille de Lancastre—
Haro! mettés moi une emplastre
Sus le coer, car, quant m'en souvient,
Certes souspirer me couvient,
Tant sui plains de melancolie.
Elle morut jone et jolie,
Environ de vingt et deux ans;
Gaie, lie, friche, esbatans,
Douce, simple, d'umble samblance.
La bonne dame ot à nom Blanche.
J'ai trop perdu, en ces deus dames,
J'en tors mes poins, j'en bac mes palmes.⁴²

⁴¹ The original parts of the portrait are to be found in ll. 875-82, 888-94, 914-17, 938, 961-65, 975-84, 988-1023.

⁴² *Le joli buisson de jonece*, ll. 241-52. The other lady referred to in l. 251 and also in l. 241 was Queen Philippa.

One more last question may be raised about the duchess. Was the marriage of Blanche and John a happy one? John's notorious infidelity to his second wife, Constance of Castile, has led some of his enemies to attribute a like conduct to him during his first marriage. His biographer, Sidney Armitage-Smith, states that no contemporary evidence supports such a belief.⁴³ In fact, the evidence, such as it is, is on the other side. In his petition to the pope for ratification and confirmation of his marriage to Katherine Swynford and for the legitimization of their children, John declared that he and Katherine had been married shortly after the death of Constance and admitted that he had had extra-marital relations with Katherine while Constance was still alive. He does not make any such statement with regard to Blanche.⁴⁴ Moreover, his grief at Blanche's death, as shown in his remembrance of each succeeding anniversary of it and in his request in his will to be buried beside her, seems sincere. According to Armitage-Smith, her death in his life "draws the dividing line. Before it all had gone well. Of the dangers which were soon to beset the Duke's path she could foresee nothing."⁴⁵

Possibly, if she had lived, the dangers might have been avoided. Such speculation, however, is futile. What is more to the point is that in the brief span of her life she commanded the love and respect of those who knew her, among whom, fortunately for her and for us, was one who combined this admiration with a facile pen—Geoffrey Chaucer.

HUNTER COLLEGE

⁴³ *John of Gaunt*, p. 462, Appen. 8. He refutes the statement of Percy Ms. 78, which places the birth of the Beauforts, John's children by Katherine Swynford, in the lifetime of Blanche.

⁴⁴ *Calendar of entries in the papal registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, IV, 545.

⁴⁵ *John of Gaunt*, p. 76.

SOME VERSE FRAGMENTS AND PROSE CHARACTERS BY SAMUEL BUTLER NOT INCLUDED IN THE COMPLETE WORKS

JOSEPHINE BAUER

IN 1825-26 the *London magazine*, in a series of five articles under the general head "Butleriana," printed, for the first time, some 582 lines of verse and 20 prose characters from the pen of the author of *Hudibras*, "a great quantity of whose unpublished manuscripts," the editor, Henry Southern, explained, "are now in our possession."¹ Obviously, when the editors of the Cambridge edition of Butler's *Complete works* asserted that they were there printing "for the first time" 66 prose characters,² 12 of which had appeared in this series over eighty years before, and a considerable amount of verse,³ some of which had been thus anticipated by over a century, they did not know of the existence of these articles. Such an oversight would be of small consequence were it but a matter of primacy in publishing. The importance of the *London* "Butleriana" is that the other 8 of the 20 prose characters and a five-page fragment of a verse narrative entitled "The doctor and his wife's pin money" do not appear in the *Complete works* at all, having doubtless been transcribed from folios now missing⁴ from the manuscripts in the British Museum, lost, perhaps—one cannot resist the conjecture—in the printing office of the *London*, through the carelessness of an editor who thought he had given them immortality

by printing them in one of the foremost periodicals of its day.

How Southern acquired the manuscripts⁵ he did not say. It is not unlikely that he procured them from Charles Baldwyn, who in 1822 published the first of a projected two-volume edition of the *Genuine remains of Samuel Butler*, with notes by Robert Thyer "corrected and enlarged" from the original manuscripts. The second volume never appeared. Baldwyn's business failed in the general capitulation of publishing houses in 1824, before he had finished his task. What, then, more probable than that Henry Southern, who had long had business relationships with him⁶ and who had already manifested his enthusiasm for Butler's "minor pieces,"⁷ should seize upon this opportunity of ob-

¹ The *Complete works* gives very little information about the history of the manuscripts. Lamar mentions only that they had been "bequeathed by the poet to his friend William Longueville" and that they are "part of Butler's Commonplace Book which in 1793 belonged to James Massey, of Rosthern, near Knutsford, Cheshire" (*Satires*, p. vii). That Thyer had them for his edition of the *Genuine remains of Samuel Butler* in 1759 is obviously indicated by the description of the manuscripts and that Charles Baldwyn had them for a second edition of the *Genuine remains* in 1822 seems implied by Lamar's acceptance of that edition as authentic. No mention is made of Southern or the *London magazine*.

² Baldwyn, until his failure, published the *Retrospective review*, which Southern edited single-handed from 1820 to 1825.

³ In a review of the *Genuine remains*, which he wrote for the *Retrospective review*, Vol. II (1820), Southern declared: "The brilliant and inexhaustible wit—the liveliness of fancy, combined with the soundest sense—the manly and independent spirit—the super-abundant erudition, and the vigour and originality of thinking, which distinguish his *Hudibras*, pervade equally his less elaborate effusions. His controversial weapons may not be always polished to the same brilliancy . . . but they belong to the same formidable armoury. . . ."

¹ *London magazine*, III (new ser.; September, 1825), 136.

² Samuel Butler, *Characters and passages from the note-books*, ed. A. R. Waller (Cambridge, 1908), p. v.

³ Samuel Butler, *Satires and miscellaneous poetry*, ed. René Lamar (Cambridge, 1928), p. xvii and Notes.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. vii.

taining from his friend the original manuscripts for a series of exclusive reviews in his newly acquired *London magazine*,⁸ the waning reputation of which he was strenuously trying to revivify? However that may be, certain it is that Charles Baldwin had the manuscripts as late as 1822, Henry Southern had them in 1825-26, and, when the British Museum acquired them in 1885, some folios were missing, including those used for at least two of the five of the series of "Butleriana." The *London magazine* has thus become the sole available source for these eight prose characters and the fragment of the verse tale, "The doctor and his wife's pin money," as well as a few odd Hudibrastic couplets not found in the *Complete works*.

Southern introduced the series with a description of the manuscripts:

They are partly in prose and partly in verse, and are generally written in a distinct and particularly small hand. They appear to have been his common-place books, in which he registered such thoughts as flitted across his mind; the prose and poetry are separate, and are divided into separate heads, such as Religion, Law, Physic, Chemistry, Astrology, &c. The poetical common-place book . . . consists of a collection of detached thoughts and comparisons arranged under the above heads, and sometimes continued for many pages together, and written consecutively but without order and connexion.⁹

Then, having elaborated somewhat upon Butler's method of putting down "quite at random" his thoughts, illustrations, etc., he observed:

Hudibras seems actually to have grown out of these very books. . . . Butler's design was to satirize the absurdities of the theology

⁸ In the spring of 1825 Southern had purchased the *London magazine* from Taylor and Hessey, for whom he had been acting as editor from the first of that year.

⁹ *London magazine*, III (new ser.; September, 1825), 137.

of the day, the follies of credulous ignorance, the Charlatanism of crafty roguery, and the abuses of government. On these subjects he has a great variety of remarks and similitudes in his common-place books, both in prose and verse; and these polished, and amplified, and thrown into the shape of a narrative, make up the extraordinary poem of Hudibras. A few extracts from the manuscripts are subjoined, partly on account of their peculiarity, and partly as specimens of his mode of composition.

These "subjoined" passages in the first article of the series include thirty lines taken from the part entitled "Law," a dozen couplets to illustrate the "curious manner in which opposite things are brought together" and the "singularity" of some of the rhymes; and two passages of forty-four and sixteen lines, respectively, as "specimens of the manner in which the Common-place Book is composed." Some of this verse was unquestionably transcribed from folios now lost; but, thanks to Butler's habit of repeating couplets in various contexts,¹⁰ all but fourteen of the lines may be found in one section or another of the Cambridge volume of *Satires and miscellaneous poetry*, though we must go to the passages under Nature, Law, Learning, Poetry, Physique, Wit and Folly, The World, Paedants, Arts and Sciences, and Writers in the "Poetical Thesaurus"; to those under Honour, Learning, and Nature in the appendix; to alternate readings in the notes; as well as to the fragmentary "Second part of satyr on the abuse of learning," to track them down.

The seven couplets from this first article which are not in the *Complete works* (though some resemble fairly closely

¹⁰ "It is remarkable that many of them are repeated in the same or in different pages, and some of them which appear to have been special favourites several times" (*ibid.*).

others found there or echo ideas in prose passages) are the following:

For lesser ballances are found to go
More accurately than great ones, and more true;
As single drops will mollify a stone,
Which mighty showers fall in vain upon.

Or the aged minister, that with a pair
Of spectacles could read the common prayer,
But could remember not one word, when those
He us'd to read it with were off his nose.
The Goth and Vandal, and the savage Hun,
Did learning less hurt than itself has done;
For ignorance, like desperate diseases,
Still stupifies the part on which it seizes.
The greatest cheats are us'd in public stocks,
And dullest errors in th' account of books;

They are not on any one theme but serve
to illustrate Butler's use of his notebooks as

mere depositaries of his loose thoughts, which he has heaped together without care or selection. . . . They are as written fairly out as they could be, without blot or obliteration, and, to the eye, have the appearance of a series of regular poems, instead of paragraphs which have no mutual dependance or connexion.¹¹

The second article of the series was devoted to the narrative fragment called "The doctor and his wife's pin money," evidently taken from some of the lost folios, since it does not appear as such and is not mentioned in the *Complete works*. However, as it is largely composed from passages in other parts of the notebook, there are very few figures and only a dozen and a half couplets that cannot be found duplicated in one or another of the sections of the volume of *Satires and miscellaneous poetry*. Southern introduced it with very little comment:

Though the following unpublished fragment, from the pen of Butler, is not distinguished by the finish and sustained wit of

Hudibras, it is not unworthy the attention of the curious. All the works of this celebrated wit are remarkable for their unpruned luxuriance; he never thinks he has said enough. . . . In the present incomplete story, this too great luxuriance is more particularly observable; it is also careless, rough, and unpolished; in short, it is Butler's muse in an undress.¹²

The story of the doctor, who endowed his wife with certain diseases to supply her with pin money, can be followed as far as Butler developed it, through the section on "Physique" in the appendix of the Cambridge volume of *Satires and miscellaneous poetry* (pp. 415 ff.); in fact, the first ninety-four lines correspond exactly with the same lines of that section, except for differences in spelling, capitalization, and an occasional unimportant word. From there forward the lines of the fragment have to be run down through the various sections of the *Satires and miscellaneous poetry*.

THE DOCTOR AND HIS WIFE'S PIN MONEY		SATIRES AND MISCEL- LANEOUS POETRY	
Lines	Page	Page	Lines
95-102	419	9-16	
103-40	417	40-49	
	418	1-28	
141-48	186	31-36	
	187	1-2	

Lines 149-50 are not found in the *Complete works*:

As other mountebanks and charlatans
Put off their own for other's ignorance.

151-54	188	31-34
155-62	187	3-10
163-74	418	29-40
175-76	187	23-24
177-78	419	27-28
179-86	418	41-48
187-94	419	1-8

Lines 195-200 are not found in exactly the same form in the *Complete works*, though

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

¹² *Ibid.*, III (new ser.; November, 1825), 425.

there are lines very similar to the first four of them under "Law" on pages 257-58. They are:

Or that just judge upon the bench that steer'd
Packt Juries by the compass of his beard
As to the right or left he turn'd the indent
Gave notice for the plaintiff or defendant,
For nothings now administer'd with safety
Unless it be in velvet and Fustafety.

201-8 189 1-8
Lines 209-12 are not in *Complete works*:

So those that serv'd their time t'another trade,
And by themselves, are free o' th' Doctors made,
Is like a voluntary Prince that's free
Of some mechanic trade or company.

213-16 420 9-12
217-18 189 9-10

Lines 219-22 are not in *Complete works*:

And great men use t'admire the paltriest shifts
An argument of mighty parts, and gifts.
For physic is a doubtful artifice,
As scissors when they cut but once, cut twice;

223 187 11
Lines 224-26 are not in *Complete works*:

For having been cordwainer to a horse,
For nothing is more desperate than modes
As plants can never thrive that grow in roads.

227-28 189 11-12
229-32 189 15-18

Lines 233-34 are not in *Complete works*:

And he 'scapes himself, and what he takes
Is proof against all smatterings of quacks.

235-36 420 13-14

Lines 237-52 are not in *Complete works*,
though among them are couplets very similar
to some found in other contexts:

So easy, that the natural'st empiric,
A dog can do it, that grazes when he is sick:
And all these interlopers have success
Beyond the licenced Doctor or disease;
And charetans, that practice upon walls
Recover more than all their hospitals,
That rack and torture worse than common
hangmen

To rescue pox and botches from the gangreen,
And every age brings forth some famous botches
That sweeps the rabble, from their ablest poches.
For all their reformados have been made
Of bankrupt dealers, in some other trade.

For some men thrive by being broke as well,
As birds, are hatch'd by breaking of the shell;
And therefore tis not strange, the greatest clerk
Has been bred up, like singing birds, in the dark.

Butler seems to have forgotten about
the story in his interest in satirizing doc-
tors. As Southern put it:

... the subject possesses all the requisites for
a diverting story; but Butler has shown as
little care for the story in this as in other
instances—it is only used as a vehicle for his
sentiments and satirical remarks.¹³

The third of the series of "Butleriana"
appeared in the number of the *London* for
January, 1826:

We continue our extracts from the singular
hoard of similes, allusions, and reasonings,
which the author of *Hudibras* was in the habit
of accumulating in his common-place book.
The present selection is made from a mass of
the same kind, under the head of ASTROLOGY.

Of the 114 lines in this number, all but
three couplets may be found in the *Satires*
and *miscellaneous poetry*, though here, as
elsewhere, not in the same sequence. The
three couplets that are not in the *Com-
plete works* follow:

And with their learning lay the elves
They only conjured up themselves

...
Their patent planetary intelligences
And secret virtues of their influences
That like mechanic theory, in small
Designs will hold, but greater not at all.

"Butleriana," No. IV, appeared the
following October. In it Southern pub-
lished twelve prose *characters* all of which
are included in the sixty-six that A. O.
Waller printed for the first time, as he
thought, in 1908.¹⁴ They are "A buffoon,"
"A cruel man," "A cutpurse," "A fencer,"
"A forger," "An Hector," "An highway-
man," "An host," "A lampooner," "A de-
tractor," "A conjurer," "A tennis player."

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 425.

¹⁴ P. v.

The last of the series of "Butleriana,"¹⁵ and the most important to students of Butler, consisted of the eight prose *characters*, already mentioned, not included in the *Complete works*. These were printed without editorial comment. In view of the fact that they are not available elsewhere and that files of the *London* are now relatively difficult of access¹⁶ to many students, it would seem desirable to reprint these eight *characters* as they appeared in the "Butleriana," to supplement the complete edition and fill out the canon. The first one, "A self-conceited man," seems to be either an earlier version or a revision of "The self-conceited or singular" included by Waller;¹⁷ but it is a distinct *character*—seven of the sentences may be found in both, although the arrangement is different and some figures appear in each that are not in the other. The rest are wholly independent.

A SELF-CONCEITED MAN

Is a very great man with himself, and reposes all trust and confidence in his own extraordinary abilities. He admires his own defects, as those that are born in poor and barren countries do their native soil, only because they have the least reason to do it. He takes his own natural humour for better or for worse, though it be within the prohibited degrees, and forsakes all others to cleave to that. The worse opinion the world has of him, the better he has of himself, and, like a disguised Prince, is pleas'd with the mistakes of those, who he believes have not cunning enough to decypher him; though he is as transparent as a cobweb. He envies no man, for envy always looks upward, and he believes all other men below him, and fitter for his contempt than emulation. He likes nothing but what he does, or would be thought to do himself, and disapproves of

¹⁵ *London magazine*, VI (new ser.; November, 1826), 396-401.

¹⁶ Only eleven complete files are listed in the *Union list of serials*, and these are concentrated in nine states.

¹⁷ P. 257.

every thing not because it is not well, but because it is not his. He has a strange natural affection for all his own conceptions, as beasts have for their young, and the rather because they are like him, that is vain and idle. He wonders that all men do not concur with him in the opinion he has of himself, but laughs to think it is their ignorance, and not his own. He confines himself to his own latitude and never looks further, which renders him so erroneous in his judgment of himself; for wanting occasion to measure himself with others, he has no way to understand his own true dimensions. He prefers, very philosophically, a known evil before an unknown good, and would not change his own familiar intimate ignorance for all the strange knowledge in the world, which he is utterly unacquainted with, and in that he does wisely; for it would, at best, but make him think worse of himself. He enjoys all the felicities which the poets fancy of a country life, and lives and dyes content on his own dunghill, with a convenient neglect of all the rest of the world.

A BAWD

Is mother of the no-maids, the Devil's Nuncia resident with the flesh, an agent for incontinence, a superintendant of the *family of love*, a siminary sister with mission to reconcile those that differ, and confirm the weak. She manages all treaties of amity, league, and alliance between party and party, and engages to see conditions performed. She is a publick envoy employ'd to maintain correspondence and good understanding between confederates. She does very good offices in her way, intercedes, mediates, and compounds all differences between the well affected, though under several forms and dispensations. She is judge of the spiritual court, and gives sentence in all matters of fornication and incontinence, that fall within her jurisdiction. She keeps an office of address, where all mens occasions may be serv'd with trust and secrecie. She is very industrious in her calling, takes great pains in brandy, and gets her living by the labour of her drinking, which swells her till she becomes a just dimension for a cart, and grows a B. of the first magnitude. Her sins and her bulk in-

crease equally together, till she becomes the badge of her profession, to signify she belongs to the flesh. After she has perform'd all her exercises, both public and private, she has her grace at the sessions, is advanc'd to the cart, and ever after is stil'd *right reverend mother in the Devil*. She is the whore's learned council, and a person of great chamber-practice; for she is very skilful in conveyances and settlements, and like a great Practiser, takes fees on both sides. She is excellent at actions of the case. She lives under the canonical obedience of the Justice and the Constable, to whom as her superiors she is subordinate, and in case of contumacy is suspended *ab officio et beneficio*, till satisfaction be made, in default of which she is depriv'd, degraded, and deliver'd over to the secular power. She deals in prohibited commodities and contraband goods, which she puts off in secret, other she and all become forfeit to the Law, and are secured to forge hemp on a wooden anvil, *till death them do part*. Next this the greatest visitation, that commonly falls upon her, is breaking of her windows, which she endures with unchristian patience, rather than venture to seek reparation of the common enemy Law and Justice.

AN AMBITIOUS MAN

Is a mortar-piece that aims upward always. He is one that flies in a machine, and the engines that bear him are pride and avarice. He mounts up into authority, as a coachman does into his box, by treading upon the wheel of fortune; and gets up to preferment, though it be on the wrong side. He leaps over hedge and ditch, like a hunting nag, and like a vaulter, will throw himself over any thing he can reach. He will climb like the cripple, that stole the weather-cock off Paul's steeple. He rises, like a meteor, from corruption and rottenness, and, when he is at his height, shines and dispenses plagues and diseases on those that are beneath him. He is like a hawke, that never stoops from his height, but to seize upon his prey. He is like the north pole to his friends, the nearer they are to him, the higher he is above them; and when they steer by him, unless they perfectly understand their variation from him, they are sure to find them-

selves mistaken. He is never familiar with any man in earnest, nor civil but in jest. He is free of nothing but his promises and his hat, but when he comes to performance, puts off the one as easy as the other. He salutes men with his head, and they him with their feet; for when he nods at one end, they make legs at the other. He is a great pageant born upon men's shoulders, that pleases those that only look upon him, and tires those that feel his weight. He sells offices at the outcry of the nation, and has his brokers, that know where to put off a commodity of justice at the best rates. He is never without a long train of suitors, that follow him and their bus'ness, and would be glad to see an end of both. He is commonly rais'd like a boy's paper-kite, by being forc'd against the popular air. His humility is forc'd like a hypocrite's, and he stands bare to himself, that others may do so too. His letters of course are like charms for the tooth-ache, that give the bearer ease for the present, according as he believes in them, for which he pays the Secretary, and after finds himself cheated both of his money and his expectations too.

A VAPOURER

Is one that vapours over every thing he does, like a hen that cackles when she has laid an egg. He overvalets all his own performances, which makes them lie upon his hands; for nobody will take them off upon such terms. Whatsoever he treats upon of himself begins, like a small poets work with his own commendation; and the first thing you meet with is *in laudem authoris*: But as no man's testimony is valid in his own case, no more in reason ought his word to pass in his own praise. He blows up his own concerns, as a butcher does his veal, to make it appear larger and fairer; but then it will not keep. He does as ridiculously, as if he gave himself his own certificate, or thought to be received with letters of his own recommendation; yet the rabble is very apt to believe in him, which he takes for their approbation; and though he receives no more from them than they had from him, yet he believes himself a gainer, and thinks he has more reason to believe in him-

self than he had before. He that praises himself and his own actions does like a beast, that licks himself and his own whelps with his tongue. It is natural to all men to affect praise and honour; but very few care to deserve it; for as stol'n pleasures are said to be most delightful, so undeserv'd glory cannot but be more pleasing to some men, than that which is earn'd with the drudgery or danger of merit. He that gives himself praise, if it be due, is no more the better for it, than if he gave himself that which he had before; but if it be undue he loses by it, as he that takes that which is not his own forfeits that which is. All his brags tend only to cloath and cover his defects, as Indians wear feathers about their breeches; for commonly he does but vapour in his own defense. Glory is nothing but a good opinion which many men hold of some one person; and if he will take that into his own hands, it is no longer to be expected from others. He that brags and vapours is but his own Pudding, and shews himself to the worst advantage; for it is a pitiful monster, that is fain to wear its own livery. His extolling of himself does but forbid others to do so; for it is a vain superfluous office to commend one that can commend himself. His success always falls out quite contrary to his design, which is nothing else but to take up reputation upon his own word; but being known not to be responsible, he always comes off with repulse, and loss of credit; yet that does not at all discourage him, for he is never told of it but in some quarrel, and then he imputes it to anger, malice, or revenge, and so it goes for nothing. Some will not vapour downright, but by circumstances and insinuations on the bye will hedge in their own praises, as if it were not meant, but only fell out by chance; others by undervaluing of themselves will hunt after their own vainglory, like tumblers, by seeming to neglect it, and lay a necessity upon men's modesties to flatter them merely out of shame and pity. They undervalue themselves, that others may overvalue them as much, like rooks at tennis, that win by losing, and gain by betting against themselves. There is no vice so odious, and yet so harmless, for it hurts nobody but its owner, and many times makes pleasant sport to

others: But as all civility is nothing but a seeming submission or condescension to others, and is grateful to all men; so whatever appears contrary to that must be incivility, and consequently as much hated.

It appears he came easily by all his pretenses, by the large measure he allows, and the willingness he expresses to put them off upon any terms. He is his own broker. All the noise he makes is but like that of a trumpet, a mere blast of wind. He is like the moon, that looks bigger the wider sphere of vapours she appears through. He is like those that cry things about the streets, who make more noise and take more pains to put off a little stinking rotten stuff, or trash, than those that have their warehouses stor'd with the richest merchandises. He never obliges a friend, but it is in the nature of an obligation, which all men are to know.

A MOROSE MAN

Is like a piece of knotted wood, every thing goes against the grain with him. He is impatient of every thing but his own humour, and endures that no longer than it is in opposition to something else. He approves of nothing but in contradiction to other men's opinions, and like a buzzard, delights in nothing more than to flutter against the wind, let it be which way it will. He is made up of cross-crosslets, and always counterchang'd; for when he is join'd with white he is sure to be black, and black with white. He esteems all men extravagant and intolerable but himself, as those that have the jaundice think all objects yellow, because their own eyes are so. He is a strict observer of his own humour, and would have every man else so too, otherwise he retires to solace himself with his own complacence; and as great men keep natural fools to please themselves in seeing somebody have less wit than themselves (which they would never do unless they kept such of purpose) he delights in his own folly, and the more ridiculous it is the better he is pleas'd with it. He is very nice and thrifty of his conversation, and will not willingly afford it, but where he thinks to enjoy the greatest share of it himself, in which he is often mistaken; for none endure him better

than those, that make him their sport, and laugh at his folly, when he thinks they do at his wit. He abhors a stranger, because having no humanity he takes him for a thing of another kind, and believes it too difficult a task ever to bring him to his humour. He hates much company though it be ever so good; for the more there are, the less share he has of his own humour, which is all she [*sic*] values or looks for. He rolls himself up in his own humour, as a dog does with his nose in his breech, and pleases himself with that which offends all others. The choice of his humour supposes his ignorance, as empty boats sail best against the stream. He is like a windmill that never moves, but when it is planted directly against the wind.

A RAILER

Is a stout man of his tongue, that will not turn his back to any man's reputation living. He will quarrel by natural instinct, as some wild beasts do, and lay violent language upon a man at first sight, and sometimes before. His tongue is his weapon, which he is very skilful at, and will pass upon any mans credit as oft as he pleases. He seldom charges, but he gets the crupper of his enemy, and wounds him behind his back. He was born to a clan with all the world, and falls out with all things (as spirits are said to converse) by intuition. His violence makes him many times hurt himself, instead of his enemy, and he blunts the point of his weapon upon some, that go so well arm'd, that their credit is impenetrable. He is as lavish of his own reputation as he is of another mans; for to set his tongue against somebodys back parts (as he usually does) is not much for his credit. He is like a leech that sucks blood out of a man's reputation behind his back. He destroys more learning and arts than the Goth and Vandal ever did; and talks more mischief than the long-parliament. He is most unmerciful to a man in his absence, and blows him up like sympathetic gunpowder, at any distance. He is an ill orator, for he never speaks well of any thing. He bites any thing that comes in his way, like a mad dog, throws his foam about, and runs on, he cares not whither, so he do but infect

somebody with his own venom. Serpents lay by their venom when they drink, but he retains his, and all his nourishment turns to gall, and he spits it out, as men in consumptions do their lungs. His words are like an ill wind that blows nobody good, and he carries a cudgel in his mouth, like a water-dog. He is an Ismaelite [*sic*], his tongue is against every man, and every mans against him. He ploughs upon men's backs, as David complains he was used; and destroys all he encounters with a jaw-bone of an ass. He fights with his mouth, as wild beasts do. He carries his bullet in his mouth, and chaws it, to make it poison the wounds it gives. He stings men like a bug; and, when he is destroyed for it, offends them as much with the stink. He is said to have a foul mouth, and whatsoever comes out of it is the fouler for having been there. He is a man of integrity, and may be believ'd to mean what he says; for no man will counterfeit that, which is bad enough of itself.

A DRUNKARD

Was conceived, like Orion, in a beast's hide and ———. He is an animal amphibium, that lives in two elements, but most naturally in the moist; for like a beaver's tail he would gangrene, if he were kept dry. He has sprung a lake, and sucks in faster than nature can pump out, till at length he founders and sinks. His soul dwells in a fenn, stifled with perpetual fog and Scotch mist. His drink and tobacco render him more like a smoaky house and a rainy day than *Solomon's* scold. He sucks in his liquor like a sponge, which the learned say is a kind of live plant, and such he becomes when he has taken his dose. He is a coronation conduit, an ale-commanding engine, an overtaker. He is like an *Irish* bog, if you do not run quickly and lightly over him, you will be apt to sink in him, and find it harder to get, than keep out of him. He takes his drink as a medicine to procure another man's health, as *catholic* penitents whip themselves for other men's sins. A beer-glass is his divining cup, with which he swallows good or bad fortune, as the country fellow did a potion to find his asses; and happiness and prosperity, or confusion and destruction ensue according as the spirit of the

drink disposes him. He conjures his reason to go out of him, as the *Greeks* do their souls when they drink wine, and this he does so oft, that at length it cannot find the way in again, and then he turns sot, and is drunk for term of life. He is never valiant but in his drink, as a madman, that has lost his wits, has double his strength. He is not given to drink, but thrown away and lost upon it. When *Noah* had escap'd the waters he presently found out wine, which drown'd and destroy'd as many sinners since, as the waters did before.

A MASTER OF ARTS

Is commonly an ill master, and as ill serv'd. —The arts are his menial servants and followers, but he keeps them so short, that they are forc'd to cheat and outwit him; for as *Tacitus* says of *Nero*, he has *infra servos ingenium*. He is as proud as a Pharisee of the title of *Master*, and his learning is like the other's righteous-

ness, that consists in straining of gnats and swallowing of camels. He wears the greatest part of his learning on his back (as a needy gallant does of his estate); for his gown is the better part of his knowledge, and all he has to shew for his degree. It is but the livery of his learning, and a loose garment that fits all sizes equally. He has been a prenticeship in breaking his natural reason, and putting it out of its pace into an artificial shuffle, that makes no progressive advance at all. He melts down all his learning into abstruse notions, that destroy the use and lessen the value of it, and by too much refining loses much of its weight; for the finer any mettall is, the more useless it becomes, and is only capable of a greater alloy. His understanding is weak and consumptive (like those that have the dog-hunger) with oppressing his capacity with more than it is able to digest.

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A FRENCH CRITIC OF HUTCHESON'S AESTHETICS

ALFRED OWEN ALDRIDGE

AS THE first systematic treatment of aesthetics in the English language, the treatise "Concerning beauty, order, harmony, design" in Francis Hutcheson's *An inquiry into the original of our ideas of beauty and virtue* remained almost free from criticism by contemporary authors. Hutcheson's biographer lists a large number of books and pamphlets directly inspired by the second treatise in Hutcheson's *Inquiry*, that "Concerning moral good and evil," but he does not cite a single discussion of Hutcheson's aesthetics.¹ Yet until the appearance of Burke's *Inquiry . . . on the sublime and beautiful*, Hutcheson's treatise was regarded as the standard English work on aesthetics, and it was widely quoted and cited with respect. The task of interpreting and criticizing Hutcheson's aesthetic theory was left to an obscure Frenchman in Ireland, Charles Louis DeVillette, who in 1750 gave an extended analysis and criticism of Hutcheson's theories in a long "Essay philosophique sur le beau, & sur le goût" in his *Œuvres mêlées*. Although DeVillette was minister of the Église Française de St. Patrick in Dublin, there is much less of theology and ethics and more of aesthetics in his work than there is in Hutcheson's. His book, published in Dublin, has been neglected by English bibliographers, probably because it is written in French, and by French bibliographers, probably because it was published in Ireland.²

DeVillette criticizes Hutcheson (1) for his failure to include intelligence as part

of the perception of beauty, (2) for his assumption that there is an arbitrary connection between objects of sense and our idea of beauty, (3) for his theory of an internal sense of beauty, and (4) for the inadequacy and falsity of his formula that beauty consists in variety with uniformity. He also (5) presents his own theory that the essence of beauty is the perception of design, (6) gives an explanation on a different foundation from Hutcheson's to reconcile the disparity of tastes and opinions with the alleged universality of the sense of beauty, and (7) reveals the general insufficiency and meagerness of Hutcheson's system.

DeVillette's essay is designed as an independent contribution to aesthetics, the criticism of Hutcheson as well as a similar criticism of Crousaz being entirely second-

¹ *Œuvres mêlées* (hereafter cited as "*Œuvres*"), consisting of one volume of 247 pages, contains "Réflexions sur le stile" and "Réflexions sur le théâtre moderne," as well as the essay on beauty and taste. The mechanics of the book are unconventional, particularly accentuation and capitalization, probably because of the time and place of publication. De Villette, who conducted services in St. Patrick's Cathedral while Jonathan Swift was dean, was born at Lausanne in 1688, served as minister at Carlow from 1723 or earlier to 1737, was licensed to the French Church of St. Patrick in 1737, and served there until his death in 1783. His other literary works include *Essai sur la félicité de la vie à venir* (Dublin, 1748) and *Dissertation sur l'origine du mal* (Dublin, 1755). Biographical information is found in Eugene and Émile Haag, *La France protestante* (Paris, 1846-59), IX (1859), 507; and Thomas Philip le Fanu, "The French Church in the Lady Chapel of St. Patrick's Cathedral, 1666-1816," an appendix (pp. 277-98) of Hugh Jackson Lawlor's *The Fasti of St. Patrick's, Dublin* (Dundalk, 1930), p. 295. In 1663 the Lady Chapel of the Anglican Cathedral of St. Patrick in Dublin was assigned to a congregation of French Protestant refugees with the stipulation that they conform to the rites and discipline of the Church of Ireland and be subject to the archbishop's jurisdiction. It is this congregation which DeVillette served (J. H. Bernard, *The cathedral church of Saint Patrick* [London, 1903], p. 55).

² William Robert Scott, *Francis Hutcheson, his life, teaching and position in the history of philosophy* (Cambridge, 1900), pp. 104-12.

ary. In an early note in the essay, De Villette remarks that he had composed a long, methodical refutation of Crousaz and Hutcheson, which he eliminated from his treatise only because such disputes would not be to the taste of his readers. Much of the material from this refutation found its way into his notes, however, and thus provides the basis of this study.

Although DeVillette's primary ideas are herein mentioned or suggested, a thorough treatment of them would require that they be set in a wide context of eighteenth-century aesthetics. When considered in relation to French aesthetics, DeVillette's essay is merely one among many which attempt to give a vaguely scientific explanation of sentiment in beauty, to discover a universal or absolute rule by which to measure taste, and to reduce the aesthetic arts to a single principle. To British aesthetics, DeVillette's essay is related mainly by the Shaftesburian concepts of sentiment and moral sense and by the specific criticism of Hutcheson. The essay is practically unique among aesthetic treatises published in the British Isles in that it nowhere mentions the sublime. To Kant and the German school there also seems to be some relation, although the precise degree of DeVillette's anticipation of Kant is difficult to ascertain because of the commonplaces in both authors. The carefully evolved Kantian doctrines of suspending judgments of purpose and of adherent beauty, however, seem to be definitely foreshadowed in DeVillette's essay.³

1. DeVillette shows in his introductory chapter that the asserting of the active participation of intelligence in the perceiving of beauty and the denying of an arbitrary connection between objects of sense and our idea of beauty are mutually related. If there is a universal beauty founded on invariable principles, a beauty

the discovery of which depends upon ourselves in some way, then we may hope to analyze beauty and discover what it is. If, on the other hand, beauty is not fixed on universal principles, reasoning about it is of no avail. According to Hutcheson's scheme, the connection between objects and our sensation of beauty is merely arbitrary, and we are allowed no scope for the exercise of our intellectual faculties. On this assumption we see only caprice, chance, or necessity. Beauty is merely a vague term applicable to all sorts of objects, designating only that which pleases. What is beauty to one person is ugliness to another. Even on the assumption of an express sense by which certain objects immediately give us a feeling of pleasure, if our mind remains absolutely passive, the operation will represent purely mechanical action, a mere point of fact about which there will be few or no explanations to give.

According to Hutcheson's statement of his theory, we have an internal sense of beauty, a "*Power of perceiving the Beauty of Regularity, Order, Harmony.*"⁴ It is called an "internal" sense to distinguish it from the "other Sensations of Seeing and Hearing, which Men may have without

³ Apart from Hutcheson and Crousaz, the writers whom he cites most frequently, DeVillette has most in common with such French predecessors as the following: Anne Lefebvre, *Mme Dacier, Des causes de la corruption du goût* (Paris, 1714); Thémiéul de Saint-Hyacinthe, *Lettres à Mme Dacier sur son livre: des causes de la corruption du goût* (no place, 1715); Jean Pierre de Crousaz, *Traité du beau* (Amsterdam, 1715); Abbé Jean-Baptiste Dubos, *Réflexions critiques sur la poésie et la peinture* (Paris, 1719); Rémond de Saint-Mard, *Réflexions sur la poésie* (La Haye, 1734); Abbé François Cartaud de la Vilate, *Essai historique et philosophique sur le goût* (Amsterdam, 1736); Le P. Yves André, *Essai sur le beau* (Paris, 1741); Jean-Baptiste d'Argens, *Réflexions historiques et critiques sur le goût et sur les ouvrages des principaux auteurs anciens et modernes* (Amsterdam, 1743); Abbé Jean-Baptiste Le Blanc, *Lettres d'un François à Londres* (La Haye, 1745); Abbé Charles Batteux, *Les Beaux-arts réduits à un même principe* (Paris, 1746); and Louis-Jean Levesque de Pouilly, *Théorie des sentimens agréables* (Genève, 1747).

⁴ *Inquiry*, p. xlii.

Perception of *Beauty and Harmony*."⁵ But, like the external senses, the internal sense of beauty is a natural power of perception or determination of the mind "to receive necessarily certain Ideas from the Presence of Objects."⁶ It is a "*passive Power of receiving Ideas of Beauty from all Objects in which there is Uniformity amidst Variety*."

To this scheme DeVillette objects that the internal sense alone would be unable to produce the sentiment of beauty, for the ideas of uniformity, variety, and regularity and their opposites suppose intelligence. A brute has the same idea as a man of the various parts of an object which are uniform with other parts, but it does not follow that he has the idea or the image of uniformity. Here DeVillette is working over a commonplace distinction between men and beasts—that only the former can think in the abstract. DeVillette argues that the idea of uniformity is the result of a judgment and that the faculty of judging belongs only to an intelligent being. A brute may have an image of a circle or a triangle, but this image does not give him the perception of regularity or arrangement. He sees the regular form without realizing the relation of one part of the object to another part. He may perceive an object containing uniformity and variety and perhaps may not receive the same ideas from the parts that are uniform and of those that are not, but he still will form no judgment on this dissemblance. This will appear more clearly, DeVillette continues, if we perceive the principle he is trying to establish in his essay—that the sentiment of the beautiful implies a moral sentiment. "Car supposé qu'on alloue aux Automates un bas degré d'Intelligence qui leur fasse appercevoir quelques rapports entre les parties d'un objet, au moins on n'ira pas jusqu'à leur

prêter des goûts moraux."⁷ An objection to Hutcheson's moral system similar to DeVillette's must have come to the attention of Hutcheson long before the publication of DeVillette's remarks, for it is treated among the additions and corrections to the fourth edition of the *Inquiry* (1738). Hutcheson admits that "Brutes are not capable of that, in which this Scheme places the highest Virtue, to wit, the *calm Motions of the Will* toward the Good of others"; but he affirms that there is something in certain tempers of brutes "so very like the lower Kinds of Virtue, that I see no harm in calling them Virtue."

2. DeVillette's second objection to Hutcheson's scheme—that if intelligence has any part in the perception of beauty, "il est impossible que la Connexion qu'il y a entre ce Sentiment & l'Ordre, ou l'Harmonie, soit Arbitraire"—is based on a fundamental difference between the system of Hutcheson and the system of the thinkers who are usually regarded as his forerunners, i.e., Plato, Clarke, and Shaftesbury.⁸ According to these philosophers, the absolute qualities—good, truth, and beauty—are eternal, immutable, exist independently of God, and are perceived in their true relations by all rational beings. According to Hutcheson, however, the Creator has arbitrarily made certain phenomena appear beautifully to particular species of being.⁹ It is possible that the deity could have formed us, Hutcheson asserts, so that we would have received no immediate pleasure from the objects we

⁵ *Œuvres*, p. 104.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁹ For a fuller account of the two systems, see A. O. Aldridge, "Akenside and the hierarchy of beauty," *Modern language quarterly*, VIII (1947), 66-67. The denial of arbitrary connection does not necessarily imply an affirmation of the Platonic view that beauty and good are independent of God. One may also believe that, since good and beauty are essential to God's nature (not antecedent to it), all his created works must therefore be based upon good and beauty and reflect them.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

now enjoy and have connected pleasure to those of a quite contrary nature.¹⁰ It is entirely a result of the sagacious bounty of the deity that he has constituted "our internal Senses in the manner in which they are; by which Pleasure is join'd to the Contemplation of those Objects which a finite Mind can best imprint and retain the Ideas of with the least Distraction; to those Actions which are most efficacious, and fruitful in useful Effects; and to those Theorems which most enlarge our Minds."

On the surface we find plausible De Villette's contention that it is impossible to reconcile a theory of intelligence operating in the perception of beauty with a theory of an arbitrary connection between objects and a sentiment of beauty, but the reasoning by which he comes to this conclusion is rather superficial. If the connection were arbitrary, he argues,

il faudroit que l'Intelligence après nous avoir montré que tel, ou tel, objet n'a aucun Arrangement, aucune Harmonie, pût aider également à nous procurer le Sentiment du Beau par le moyen de ce même objet. Quoi, elle pourroit contribuer à un même Sentiment en nous faisant envisager des caracteres entierement opposez! Ce qui nous sert à distinguer entre Beauté & Laideur nous feroit indifferement trouver Beaux les objets revetus des caracteres du Beau, & les objets entierement depourvûs de ces caracteres! La contradiction saute aux yeux.¹¹

Here DeVillette assumes that the arbitrary connection between the world of objects and a sense of beauty is coexistent with a free intelligence passing judgment on this arbitrary connection. He seems to suggest that an arbitrary connection presupposes that everything will appear beautiful but that our intelligence will show us disorder and disharmony in some things. If we assume an arbitrary connection between objects and our sentiment of

beauty, however, we must assume also that the instruments, including intelligence, which produce the sentiment are also arbitrarily controlled. Our pleasure in the regularity of beauty and our displeasure in the irregularity of ugliness could be arbitrary, and our intelligence could still enable us to analyze irregularities and disharmonies.

DeVillette turns to introspection in continuing his proof of the participation of intellect in the perception of beauty. If we examine ourselves, he asserts, we shall find that in the perception of beauty there is something more than simple sensation, that there is a tacit judgment coming from reason and reflection. As soon as we realize that an object does not in itself excite the slightest notion or sentiment of beauty, even though, like a lump of sugar, it may create a pleasant sensation, we shall conclude that it is intelligence upon which beauty depends principally and essentially and that, consequently, beauty is not any more arbitrary than is truth.

3. Hutcheson had anticipated that his theory of an internal sense of beauty would be attacked on the ground that it presupposes an innate idea or some principle of knowledge other than the external; and he answers this objection by stating that both the external and the internal senses are "*natural Powers of Perception, or Determinations of the Mind* to receive necessarily certain Ideas from the Presence of Objects."¹² DeVillette attacks Hutcheson's theory not because it is based on innate ideas but because its basis is so vague and indefinite that the existence of a sense of beauty—the phenomenon that it is intended to support—is doubtful. DeVillette is unwilling to accept a purely mechanical process as the cause of a sentiment which he considers to be the work of intelligence. In preparing for his own

¹⁰ *Inquiry*, p. 100.

¹¹ *Œuvres*, p. 105.

¹² *Inquiry*, p. 80.

definition of beauty, he asserts that all sentiments of beauty are based on love and gratitude; and he cannot find any foundation for these feelings in corporeal sensations. "Ainsi à moins que l'on ne reçoive le Sens Interne de Monsieur Hutcheson, ce Sens Inconnu, & Inconcevable, qui n'est ni Physique, ni Moral, il est evident que ce qu'il y a de sentiment dans le Beau est purement Moral; Car assurément aucune sensation corporelle ne peut avoir une partie Essentielle à la Constitution du Beau."¹³ In other words, DeVillette objects to Hutcheson's internal sense of beauty but adopts his moral sense, avoiding inconsistency by asserting that only a difference in degree separates the perception of beauty in physical and in moral objects.

Before proceeding with DeVillette's criticism, it is necessary to give a brief view of his psychology. Unlike Hutcheson's system, which is based on the direct perception of an internal sense of beauty, DeVillette's is based on sentiment, a combination of direct sense-perception and internal imagination.¹⁴ DeVillette defines sense as a faculty distinct from all that is purely from intelligence, a susceptibility to what we experience when we have what is called a "sentiment." "Ce n'est point par elle même, ou immédiatement, que mon Intelligence excite un Sentiment. Le Sentiment a sa source immédiate dans l'objet que l'organe corporel, ou les Facultez Intellectuelles, présentent à notre Ame."¹⁵ Beauty, however, can concern only the faculty of our mind called "imagination." No matter how agreeable a sensation may be, it has nothing in com-

mon with beauty unless it gives us an idea or an image. This is true whether the sentiment be caused by a physical sense or by an idea. "C'est à dire en d'autres termes qu'un objet n'est pas Beau par cela même qu'il nous cause un Sentiment agréable, & qu'il ne devient Beau qu'en Vertu d'une certaine connoissance, ou d'une certaine Image, qu'il imprime dans notre Ame." Beauty consists, therefore, of both sensation and an agreeable sentiment. In the general idea of the term "beauty," "nous embrassons & l'image du Bel objet, & le doux Sentiment qu'il excite."¹⁶ No object can be beautiful unless it is proper to excite an agreeable sentiment, and it cannot excite an agreeable sentiment unless it has a visible tendency toward an end. The visible resulting of an object in a determined end implies a design in the formation of the object, and the idea of a design or a finished work implies even more clearly the idea of an agent endowed with liberty and intelligence. Since the sentiment of beauty is an agreeable sentiment, it is evident that a design which one perceives in a beautiful object and which serves to excite this sentiment is a benevolent design—in general, the design of occupying or exercising agreeably either our physical sense, our intellectual faculties, or our moral tastes. As a consequence of these principles, DeVillette specifies three necessary elements of beauty: (1) an image of the object in which is contained a knowledge of the quality or qualities which it has to make an impression on the mind; (2) a view of the tendency of an end or the idea of the quality or qualities that make the object proper to excite a sentiment

¹³ *Œuvres*, p. 104.

¹⁴ DeVillette's system immediately brings to mind Levesque de Pouilly's *Théorie des sentiments agréables* (1747); but DeVillette asserts that his treatise was written before he read Levesque de Pouilly's book (p. 99). The latter, furthermore, is primarily ethical and DeVillette's primarily aesthetic.

¹⁵ *Œuvres*, p. 112.

¹⁶ Throughout his treatise DeVillette seems to be using the single word "sentiment" to express two separate ideas, i.e., "sensation" (direct response to a single sense-perception) and "sentiment" (a general state of feeling or confluence of several separate sensations). In my discussion of his thought, instead of the single word "sentiment," I shall use the two words to distinguish the two ideas.

and the idea of a design relative to these qualities formed by a free and intelligent being who is author of the object; (3) and an agreeable sentiment excited by the view of this design and accompanied with a sentiment of gratitude or a sentiment of love.

It is obvious that DeVillette's theory of agreeable sentiments is more complicated than Hutcheson's theory of an internal sense as a passive power of receiving ideas of beauty from all objects in which there is uniformity amid variety. Although DeVillette selects only love and gratitude from our moral sentiments as essential to beauty, considering other moral senses, like the physical senses, as merely means to or occasions of beauty, he asserts that, strictly speaking, we have only a single moral sense, "*Une Disposition, ou Faculté, naturelle par laquelle independamment de notre Volonté toute idée d'un objet Moral excite en nous un sentiment.*"¹⁷ For proof of the existence or reality of a moral sense he refers to the arguments of Hutcheson.

The basic difference here between Hutcheson and DeVillette is that Hutcheson regards as entirely separate the sense of beauty and a moral sense, whereas DeVillette (like Shaftesbury, whose moral and aesthetic scheme Hutcheson is developing) makes no organic distinction between our perception of physical and of moral beauty. There is another fundamental difference between DeVillette's concept of moral sense and Hutcheson's. DeVillette assumes the operation of intelligence and reflection, whereas Hutcheson conceives moral sense, like his sense of beauty, as an immediate and arbitrary reaction to a stimulus. According to Hutcheson, moral sense is "*a Determination of our Minds to receive the simple Ideas of Approbation or Condemnation, from Actions observ'd, antecedent to any Opinions of Ad-*

vantage or Loss to redound to ourselves from them; even as we are pleas'd with a regular Form, or an harmonious Composition, without having any Knowledge of Mathematics, or seeing any Advantage in that Form or Composition, different from the immediate Pleasure."¹⁸

Although DeVillette makes no distinction between a sense of beauty and a moral sense, he, of course, recognizes a difference between physical and moral objects and asserts that our responses to them are different. He lists as the effects of moral objects which distinguish them from physical: their striking instantaneously, their clear and forceful impression, and their universality. There is no man, no matter how little cultivated, he maintains, who is not forcefully affected with moral objects, whereas many men remain entirely impervious to the beauty of physical objects. Although DeVillette accepts Hutcheson's arguments to prove the existence of moral sense, he accuses Hutcheson of treating moral beauty inadequately. When it is a question of moral beauty, he asserts, Hutcheson no longer speaks of uniformity, variety, and unity as he does concerning the beauty of physical objects and of theorems. Moral beauty has, although Hutcheson fails to specify them, distinctive characteristics which are analogous in many ways to other kinds of beauty. Whether Hutcheson omitted a particular analysis of the traits of moral beauty because he could not accommodate them to his preceding principles or whether he believed that he was doing enough by proving the existence of a moral sense, Hutcheson's treatment is defective. In his explanation of moral beauty which remedies this defect in Hutcheson's treatise, DeVillette tells us:

Toutes les Vertus se réunissent dans un Point—savoir—la BIENFAISANCE, ou le BON-

¹⁷ *Œuvres*, p. 135.

¹⁸ *Inquiry*, p. 129.

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HEUR: Elles s'y portent sans aucun detour, & tout visiblement: Ainsi chaque partie de l'objet Moral a une affinité très sensible avec le bon Dessein, dont la vue en gros fait le Beau de cet objet: Et son impression doit être fort vive parceque c'est de nos affections Morales que depend presque toute notre Felicité.¹⁹

DeVillette recognizes that in the perception of beauty we are not always conscious of our discovering a design in the object or of reasoning back to a generous Creator and responding with gratitude and love. Often in the sentiments of people who are qualified to appreciate beauty there is much that is implicit which they never analyze. Having made no inquiry into the first impressions of beauty in their minds, they are accustomed to regarding all impressions without examination as the result of pure mechanism. It is this, he suggests, which may have given rise to Hutcheson's supposition of an internal sense. But ignorance or inadvertence, he continues, does not prove that there is no basic cause of the phenomenon in question, a remote source which depends in part on our intelligence and which is really the origin of the combination of ideas and dispositions from which arises the impression of beauty.²⁰

DeVillette's final objection to a theory of the special sense of beauty is that it can explain only one class of phenomena and that a different special sense must be assumed for every particular class in which we find beauty.²¹ It follows from Hutcheson's examples, he charges, that there are as many kinds of beauty as there are speculations which please, and this would require a particular internal sense for each one of the pleasing speculations. One sense would be needed for the idea of uniformity, another for variety, and another for diversity, that is to speak of one sense for

uniformity joined to variety, another for proportion, and another for the unity of objects inclosed in a theorem. This observation, he asserts, furnishes arguments against Hutcheson's principle of the universality of an internal sense in human kind.

4. DeVillette objects particularly to the principle which Crousaz and Hutcheson have in common, that beauty consists in variety amid uniformity; and he presents in contrast a quite different principle, that beauty is the agreeable sensation attendant on the intellectual recognition of a good design, that "le Beau roule principalement sur cette sorte de plaisir que nous donne tout objet qui rit à l'Imagination, c'est à dire qui nous fournit l'idée, non de l'exemption de quelque Mal, mais de ce que nous entendons par le mot de Volupté, ou de Plaisir proprement ainsi nommé."²² Agreeable sensation is the chief, though not the only, characteristic of beauty. To Hutcheson's principle that an object is more or less beautiful in proportion to its greater or lesser degree of variety and uniformity, DeVillette objects that these qualities have little relation to the sentiment which an object is proper to excite. According to Hutcheson's principle, he asserts, a mathematical figure such as a polygon would have as much beauty as any other object with neither more uniformity nor more variety; a windmill would be more beautiful than any other object with less uniformity and variety, no matter how agreeable or pleasurable. But, DeVillette asks, would we actually find a windmill more beautiful than an apartment furnished with sim-

²² *Ibid.*, p. 127. Throughout his treatise DeVillette gives nearly as much attention to Crousaz as he gives to Hutcheson and shows that they have many ideas in common, the most important of which is Crousaz' formula "de l'uniformité au milieu de la diversité" (Crousaz, p. 12). Although Hutcheson could have known and used Crousaz' treatise, there is no direct internal or external evidence that he did.

¹⁹ *Œuvres*, p. 181.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 139.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 174.

plicity, appropriateness, and elegance? Would we find a lock composed of ingenious devices more beautiful than a nicely wrought snuffbox?

The more satisfactory explanation that beauty depends on agreeable sentiment stemming from the perception of design, DeVillette asserts, appropriately marks the superior beauty of moral objects to physical objects: "C'est qu'il n'y a aucun objet Moral qui considéré avec soin ne penetre le cœur par l'idée d'une douce, & noble, Volupté, au lieu que les objets Physiques ... se reduisent à nous donner la fade, la languissante, image de quelque petit Mal prévenu, ou évité, ou de quelque petit Bien à-peine digne du plus foible de nos desirs."²³ Although DeVillette finds Hutcheson's principles unsatisfactory, he does not entirely give up unity and proportion as characteristics of beauty. In discussing physical features he asserts that an object of beauty must be composed, that is, it must have diverse parts of which we can form an image; its execution must conform to its design; and its diverse parts must terminate in a single point, that is, it must have unity of design.²⁴ After presenting these principles as the only absolutely distinctive characters of beauty, he proceeds to discuss the part which uniformity, variety, diversity, and the combination of these three qualities play in the composition of a beautiful object. As a preliminary step, he defines the three terms, something, he asserts, which Crousaz and Hutcheson, who regard them as essential to beauty, inexcusably failed to do. Both, he adds, use "variety" and "diversity" incorrectly as synonymous terms. "Uniformity," which hardly permits equivocation, means "equality" or "close resemblance." "Variety" marks differences between an object of one kind and other objects of the same kind. Its

application should be confined to objects of the same species and not to objects of the same genus. "Diversity," a broader term, should be used not only to indicate differences between objects of the same genus but also to indicate total differences of any nature whatsoever. "Variety" always supposes uniformity, whereas "diversity" never supposes uniformity.

DeVillette admits that every object is either uniform or has variety in its parts, whether the parts be diverse or whether there be a mixture of diversity with uniformity. But he insists that none of these characters or any combination of them is an essential characteristic of beauty. This he proves by showing how beauty may exist independently of any one of these traits. An object may be beautiful without uniformity, e.g., a mountain, a woods, a prairie, a valley, a field of grain. The resemblance of some of the parts to others, as a tree to a tree, a cluster of kernels to another cluster, does not give uniformity to the object seen in its entirety. An object may be beautiful without either variety or diversity, e.g., a large flower of a single color, all the leaves of which resemble one another both by arrangement and by form. Or an object which contains all three elements of uniformity, variety, and diversity may not be beautiful. For example, several round or square stones heaped up pell-mell on a pile of sand with some dry sticks and oyster shells do not make a beautiful whole. It is clear, then, he concludes, that these qualities do not in themselves constitute the beautiful but that they participate in beauty by means of their arrangement, their visible converging toward the same end. He adds, however, that even though these traits are not essential to beauty considered in general, each one of them is necessary to the beauty of certain objects in particular or is proper to augment the beauty of most

²³ *Œuvres*, p. 129.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

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²⁵ *Ibid.*

objects.²⁵ Some objects, he points out, are beautiful because of their regularity, others because of their irregularity; but, in general, whatever object is beautiful either by its regularity or by its irregularity will be made more beautiful by a combination of one or the other of the two qualities.

In referring again to Hutcheson, De Villette accepts the principle that beauty exists in proportion to the degree of variety mixed with uniformity as valid only if in the idea of variety is understood the idea of diversity and if the idea of arrangement is included in a comparison of objects of the same kind. But Hutcheson "ne dit mot ni de la différente nature des objets, ni de l'Arrangement requis: Ainsi ses observations dans cet endroit me paroissent inexactes, & incomplètes."²⁶ The concept of arrangement is for DeVillette an indispensable element of aesthetic theory, an element which comprehends the three characters which, we shall see in the next section, he regards as the only ones absolutely distinctive. Although Hutcheson may neglect the concept of arrangement, his formula, which in one form or another goes back to classical antiquity, is usually considered more tenable than DeVillette grants.

5. To replace Hutcheson's inadequate principle that beauty consists of uniformity amid variety, DeVillette early in his treatise asserts his sovereign principle that the view or idea of a design is the idea most necessary to indicate what essentially constitutes the beautiful. Later he tells us that arrangement necessarily implies a design. If it were possible for a harmonious and agreeable object to be formed by a blind cause or machine, one might in vague terms say that it is beautiful, but after reflection one would realize that it merely resembles beauty, that it

lacks the effect produced by an accord between intelligence and sense.²⁷ If in such a situation we retain a sentiment of the same nature as that of the beautiful, it will be because the strength of our association of an idea of design with that of an agreeable image is so great that, in spite of our conviction of the absence of design in the object in question, our imagination allows the sentiment of beauty to persist. But no genuine feeling of beauty may exist without our perceiving the idea of a design and experiencing some movement of love and gratitude:

Il est bien vrai que souvent nos idées sont ou si peu développées, ou passent si légèrement, & nos Sentimens sont si foibles, & nous nous attachons si peu à démêler l'objet auquel ils se rapportent, que nous voyons, & sentons, sans être instruits de nos Idées, & de nos Sentimens: Mais cela ne prouve point que nous n'avons ni ces Idées, ni ces Sentimens.²⁸

In passing through a field covered with flowers, for example, it may be that we have only a faint and vague idea of design, so faint that we barely feel the slight movement of love and gratitude that this idea excites. Notwithstanding its ephemerality, we are sure of the reality of the idea when we examine our feelings with care. Here DeVillette is open to the charge of treating his subject sparsely and ambiguously—the charge that he brings against Crousaz and Hutcheson—for he certainly fails to give a clear idea of what he means by "design." Does he mean final causes? When passing through the field of flowers, must we momentarily consider to ourselves that the blooms are instrumental in the reproductive process? Kant in discussing this very same situation remarked that only the botanist would recognize the reproductive function of the flower but that even the botanist would ignore this function when using his taste

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

to judge beauty.²⁹ Or must we, as Addison might suggest, momentarily consider that the flowers are intended to contribute to the pleasure and use of mankind? If design is to be taken in this sense, it would seem that children, who do not perceive this kind of design, could not appreciate the beauty of a field of flowers. Also according to this narrow concept of design, the delight that we experience in looking through a kaleidoscope could not be considered to be due to the perception of beauty; for, in a sense, the formations of designs in a kaleidoscope are the result of blind chance or mechanics.

These objections are partly answered, however, by a further remark by De Villette. What makes us believe that we may experience beauty without perceiving a design, he says, is that we are likely to confuse that which pleases with that which is beautiful, a confusion from which Hutcheson is not exempt. All beautiful objects give pleasure, but not all objects which please are beautiful. For an object to be beautiful,

il faut qu'outre le Plaisir immediat qu'il me donne en affectant un de mes sens il me Plaise encore en vertu d'un sentiment excité par une idée qu'il occasionne, & dont la source réelle & immediate, est dans mon Entendement. Cette idée depend de l'image de l'objet & ne peut être autre chose que l'idée du Dessein.³⁰

DeVillette might say, therefore, that the kaleidoscope may give pleasure without being beautiful or that children may receive pleasure from flowers without perceiving their beauty.

Later in his essay DeVillette gives two general rules which provide a more specific idea of what he means by design:

1. Un objet est Beau à proportion du degré de Sagesse, c'est à dire de Sagacité, de genie,

²⁹ Ernst Cassirer (ed.), *Immanuel Kants Werke* (Berlin, 1922), V, 299. (Hereafter cited as "*Kants Werke*.")

³⁰ *Œuvres*, p. 124.

d'habileté, qui se montre dans les moyens nécessaires à l'exécution du Dessein, comme sont les combinaisons, les rapports.

2. En second lieu, & principalement, un objet est Beau à proportion du degré de Bienfaisance (de cette Bienfaisance qui concerne, non une exemption de Mal, mais un Plaisir actuel, & *Positif*, un Plaisir tel que je l'ai indiqué) à proportion, dis-je, du degré de Bienfaisance que le Dessein étale au Spectateur.³¹

These rules prove, he continues, that design is the essential element of beauty. Design is implicit in arrangement, a term which comprehends the absolutely distinctive traits of a beautiful object and which implies composition, execution, and the convergence of the parts to a single end. Arrangement is absolutely essential to beauty, whereas uniformity, variety, diversity, symmetry, proportion, and regularity or irregularity are never essential in themselves, although they may in particular objects serve to produce or augment beauty.

These general observations, DeVillette adds, apply only to absolute beauty (the beauty in an object in nature or some established idea) and not to relative beauty (the beauty in an imitation of some original), for the beauty of imitation consists only in a faithful reproduction of the object and the representation of an ugly object or an object lacking arrangement may in itself be very beautiful. He refers to Hutcheson as a source for this principle—a principle stemming from Aristotle's *Rhetoric* (i. 11. 23)—as well as for the distinction between absolute and relative beauty.³²

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

³² For a discussion of absolute and relative beauty see Clarence D. Thorpe, "Addison and Hutcheson on the imagination," *ELH*, II (1935), 226. Hutcheson also considers design in his treatise, but not as the primary element of beauty. He devotes a whole section to "our Reasonings about Design and Wisdom in the Cause, from the Beauty or Regularity of Effects," but concentrates on proving the existence of design in

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On the surface it would appear that any kind of irregularity or variety in an object would interfere with its design or immediate tendency toward an end. In a full discussion of this subject in which he regards irregularity as not incompatible with beauty as long as it does not conceal the view of a design, DeVillette cites Hutcheson's statement that irregularity is no proof of an agent's having no design in the formation of an object:

Loin de nous dérober toujours la vue du Dessein elle sert souvent à marquer un Dessein qui surpasse de beaucoup celui des objets Reguliers: Souvent elle nous etale des rapports nouveaux, des combinaisons bisarres, qui font un composé tout aimable, que l'Art ne rencontre qu'en imitant les Beautés de la Nature.³³

Irregular objects give us relief from an artificial monotony to which we have been too long accustomed. After leaving a city with its regular houses and streets, for example, we are delighted with the charming wildness of the country. DeVillette goes even further in saying that a part which has no relationship to a whole and which, according to his own principles, would seem to be a blemish, an *hors-d'œuvre*, may nevertheless contribute notably to the beauty of the whole. One assumes that this incongruous object, provided that it interferes in no way with the general design, has been so placed to give relief to the other parts of the whole. "Qu'il fait une *Diversité* extraordinaire, & d'un goût plus piquant que celui de toute autre *Diversité* imaginable." Two things are necessary for this effect: (1) The incongruous object must be rare, for if it were common it would indicate confusion; and (2) the incongruous object must in itself be destitute of all regularity and beauty.

the universe rather than on analyzing the psychological effect of perceiving design.

³³ *Œuvres*, p. 161.

Its merit consists entirely in its ugliness. "S'il avoit de la Beauté, mais une Beauté qui ne concourût point à celle du grand Tout, on pourroit à bon droit le condamner comme un défaut dans l'ouvrage; Au lieu que sa Difformité absolue, & la place qu'il occupe, decouvrent dans l'Ouvrier une habileté consommée." Because of this reasoning DeVillette is forced to defend himself from inconsistency in another section of his treatise in which he discusses the superiority of Greek and Roman architecture over Gothic, a superiority based on the wise economy in the dispensation of diversity and variety which serves to fix in our minds the perception of design. His position here is that the bizarre ornaments of Gothic architecture, particularly the *fanfreluches*, neither concur to show the general design nor give luster by a felicitous contrast. Having no relation to the whole, they weaken the impression of beauty by interfering with the perception of design through the intrusion of an array of foreign objects. In reviewing his argument in this section, he combines Hutcheson's formula of uniformity amid variety with his own emphasis on design:

Plus un grand objet contient de Pieces Uniformes, & de Parties Diverses & Variées, plus il est Beau, pourvûque cette Uniformité, cette Diversité, cette Variété, ayent un rapport très visible au même Aboutissement, ou Dessein. Tant de fleurs qu'il vous plaira, & aussi différentes que vous voudrez, dans un vaste Parterre, pourvûqu'elles soient bien placées, ne derangent rien à sa Beauté: Au contraire elles l'augmentent parcequ'elles ont toutes une Tendence manifeste au même but: De même dans un vaste Paysage le nombre, & la Diversité, des objets augmentent sa Beauté parcequ'ils se rapportent tous au grand Dessein de nous frapper agréablement, & vivement, par le magnifique étalage de ces créatures innombrables qui servent à nous entretenir, & à gratifier tous nos Sens.³⁴

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 211-12.

To establish conclusively the superiority of his principles over those of Hutcheson and Crousaz, DeVillette applies them to various phenomena previously considered by the other two writers. From Crousaz he selects the example of a superb palace admirably constructed, which all people agree to be beautiful.³⁵ DeVillette objects particularly to Crousaz' claiming its *Simple Commodité* as entering into its beauty. Commodity or utility, he says, has no bearing on beauty, for a subterranean cave or a mud hut would be more efficacious than the salons of the Louvre in keeping out the heat or cold. We conceive of a palace as beautiful because it gives us the idea of a vast and pleasant habitation, to the design of which are joined such auxiliary ideas as "celles de Grandeur, de *Preciosité*, de *Rareté*." Among those who refuse to admit utility as an essential of beauty, Kant is perhaps best known with his doctrine that judgments about beauty are independent of any idea of purpose, but Hutcheson also had spoken out against Berkeley's treatment of utility as an element of beauty.³⁶

From Hutcheson, DeVillette selects for comment the examples of animals and theorems, examples which take up considerable space in Hutcheson's treatise. Animals, according to Hutcheson, may be beautiful because of their inward structure or their outward form.³⁷ In them we find uniformity in the structure of their vital parts and unity of mechanism in their bodily motions. Among animals of the same species there exists an obvious unity in physical features; and in each individual there is a universal beauty from the exact resemblance of all the external double members (eyes, ears, legs, arms) to

each other. There is a further beauty arising from "a certain *Proportion* of the various Parts to each other" and from the mechanism "apparently adapted to the Necessities and Advantages of any Animal." Fowls, in addition to all the above, have a beauty from the variety of their feathers, as well as from their colors and shades, visible even in a single feather. To these principles DeVillette has a number of objections. Some animals, e.g., earthworms, when considered by themselves without relation to a grand whole are not beautiful.³⁸ Ingenious mechanism is not sufficient to make a work beautiful; there must be, as we have already seen, an agreeable sentiment, a feeling of positive pleasure or benevolence, based on the perception of design. A surgical instrument may be an ingenious mechanism which we may admire without regarding it as beautiful. DeVillette then gives his own opinion of what constitutes the beauty of particular animals. With some animals it is the plumage of gold and azure; with some it is the smooth coat, gleaming or spotted; with others it is the figure which gives us an agreeable idea of some eminent quality, some happy talent. The diversity of colors of the peacock, their variety and arrangement, the gracious ornament of the head, the length of the tail—all form an object purely beautiful because we assume that this astonishing assemblage has as its aim only to make a strong and agreeable impression. Perception of design, then, means to DeVillette our believing that the purpose of an object is to give pleasure to the beholder. He agrees with Hutcheson that proportion is one of the beauties of animals, but he charges that Hutcheson fails to tell us why. Here, he asserts, is something in Hutcheson's work which is vague, uncertain, and incomplete. DeVillette's explanation is that the harmony

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

³⁶ *Kants Werke*, V, 203, 290. See the additions to the fourth edition of Hutcheson's *Inquiry*.

³⁷ *Inquiry*, pp. 23-26.

³⁸ *Œuvres*, p. 172.

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of the parts is necessary to the manifestation of the design. In order to understand the lightness and speed of a gazelle or a hare, we must be aware of the niceness of its limbs, the proportion required for equilibrium, and the degree of activity and strength which the creature's environment demands. This treatment of the perception of design is a real anticipation of Kant's doctrine of adherent beauty. Kant, after ruling out simple utility as an aesthetic principle, realized that there is pleasure in perceiving a design mingled with a known end. Hence he established the class of "adherent beauty" comprising such objects as men, horses, and buildings; houses, churches, arsenals, and similar structures.³⁹ The main difference between Kant and DeVillette is an implied difference in epistemological outlook. Kant, like phenomenologists or exponents of modern psychologism, stresses the subjectivity of design in the aesthetic process. Although perception of an object, a beautiful flower, for example, is necessary for pleasure from perceiving design, actually the harmony of design is in ourselves. DeVillette, however, implies that design is present in nature, that we perceive something external and objective. In his system design seems to be both *a priori* and concrete.

DeVillette is somewhat reluctant to accept Hutcheson's hypothesis that theorems have beauty, and he completely discards Hutcheson's view that their beauty comes from the unity of an infinity of objects and applications which they contain. If we can say with propriety that a theorem is beautiful, DeVillette asserts, it is beautiful because it presents a long chain of consequences tending toward a final end, that of adding understanding to our knowledge. It agreeably affects our imagination with the idea of learning and

knowing. DeVillette is dissatisfied also with Hutcheson's inadequate explanation of the pleasure we find in discords in musical compositions. Not certain of the reason, Hutcheson wonders whether discords please us by "refreshing the Ear with *Variety*, or by awakening the Attention, and enlivening the Relish for the succeeding Harmony of Concords, as Shades enliven and beautify Pictures, or by some other means not yet known."⁴⁰ DeVillette attempts to explain this phenomenon by analogy. A palace in ruins which in itself contains not the slightest trace of beauty appears agreeable when seen at the end of a long avenue. The chaos of the palace, ugly in itself, takes on beauty because it enters into the composition of a whole. It furnishes a resting place to the view, which without it would be dissipated at the end of the vista:

Cette Diversité singulière sans offusquer la vue du Dessin de ce Tout relève la Beauté de toutes les autres parties qui par leurs rapports visibles concourent au même But, & que par là il entre dans ce concours general, quoique d'une maniere différente, & doit par conséquent être regardé comme appartenant au même Dessin.⁴¹

DeVillette's explanation is not entirely satisfactory, however, for a ruined castle is hardly parallel to a discordant musical note; the castle is considered to be ugly in itself, whereas the note by itself is neither ugly nor beautiful. The discordant note becomes discordant or ugly only when it forms part of a composition.

6. DeVillette regards his system as superior to Hutcheson's because he is able to explain both physical and intellectual beauty by essentially the same principles, even though he makes a radical distinction between objects of physical beauty and objects of moral beauty. Moral

³⁹ *Inquiry*, p. 28.

⁴⁰ *Œuvres*, pp. 177-78.

⁴¹ *Kants Werke*, V, 299.

beauty, DeVillette maintains, is something fixed, invariable, and absolute.⁴² Some qualities or characters are always beautiful and virtuous, and their opposites are always ugly and vicious. In regard to these objects, which affect our moral sense, the judgments of all men unite. It is impossible to have natural dispositions contrary to moral beauty, for these would end in misery and destruction, and a sovereignly good creator could not allow us to enter the world with evil dispositions. If it is said that a man may have a disposition toward some evil, e.g., parricide, this disposition is not a natural one but a creature of the man's own cultivation. Our illusions may sometimes cause us to regard our vices as virtues, but their original nature is still not altered. We may regard excessive pride as nobility of sentiments or avarice as wise economy, but they are still vices. Our mistaken view represents a corruption of our natural taste, a corruption of our judgment concerning moral beauty. Our natural tastes are never bad, but they may be vitiated.

Physical beauty is unlike moral beauty in that it is relative to the dispositions of the contemplator. An object which appears to be of little or no beauty to one person may seem extremely beautiful to another. In regard to purely physical beauty, the maxim "*Il ne faut pas disputer des Goûts*" is valid. Its application, however, is limited to two categories. The first consists of articles of food, odors, sounds, or colors which are agreeable to one person and disagreeable to another. This purely mechanical response has no relation to beauty. The second category consists of judgments of beauty, those made by people whose dispositions, faculties, or talents do not permit them to perceive the beauties of certain objects or which cause them to prefer a less beautiful

object to one of real beauty. Although one may apply the maxim "*Il ne faut pas disputer des Goûts*" to this situation, its use does not imply that there is no standard of beauty. There may be different opinions concerning beauty, but beauty itself does not change according to opinion. DeVillette's whole section on taste, from the proverb that there is no disputing about taste to the demonstration of good and bad taste, is parallel to Lord Kames's later demonstration of a standard in taste distinct from general opinion.⁴³

The problem which confronts all writers who assume universal standards of beauty is to account for the multiplicity of diverse tastes and opinions concerning beauty in the world. Hutcheson, although contending that observation and experience show a universal agreement in mankind that beauty is found in uniformity amid variety, explains that a diversity of fancy may exist because of varying temperaments and the association of ideas.⁴⁴ The Goths, for example, may have turned against Roman architecture because of a conjunction of hostile ideas concerning the people of Rome. A desolate country may be very agreeable to a person who has spent the cheerful days of his youth in it, and a very beautiful place may seem disagreeable if it was the scene of earlier misery. We must remember, moreover, that "there may be *real Beauty*, where there is not the *greatest*." Although the Goth is mistaken in believing his architecture more beautiful than the Roman, it is real beauty in his own buildings founded on uniformity amid variety which pleases him. The Gothic pillars are uniform to each other in their sections and in their height and ornament, and Gothic arches are segments of similar curves. "Men may

⁴² *Elements of criticism* (4th ed.; Edinburgh, 1785), chap. xxv.

⁴⁴ *Inquiry*, sec. 6.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 199.

have different Fancys of Beauty, and yet *Uniformity* be the *universal Foundation* of our Approbation of any Form whatsoever as *Beautiful*." Although Hutcheson is attempting to prove that our sense of beauty is antecedent to custom, habit, education, or the prospect of interest, his hypothesis of associationism is a tacit admission that standards of beauty are not universal.

DeVillette, on his part, attempts to save universality by making a distinction between that which pleases and that which is beautiful, a distinction of great importance also in Crousaz' treatise. DeVillette maintains that the beautiful always pleases but that what pleases is not always beautiful, whereas Crousaz maintains that we sometimes give the name of beauty to that which does not please and refuse it to that which does please. The person with no taste or an undeveloped or vitiated taste, DeVillette declares, may say that an object does or does not please him, but he has no authority to pass on its beauty.⁴⁵ The person who states that one object is beautiful and another ugly must be able to demonstrate, or at least designate clearly, the good qualities of one and the faults of the other. Popular vogue, fashion, or the customs of one nation or of several nations thus have no bearing on beauty. DeVillette particularly ridicules one of the most common notions of eighteenth-century aesthetics, the *je ne sais quoi* as an estimate or criterion of beauty. The phrase in an enlightened age, DeVillette maintains, is sheer stupidity. It is merely an attempt to mask ignorance under a pretense of superior knowledge. It gives us no more information than the phrase *je n'en sais rien* but bathes us in a ridiculous light which the blunt honesty of the second phrase would help us avoid. This criticism helps twentieth-century readers to see the in-

consistency of earlier writers who tried to combine the *je ne sais quoi* with universal standards.

DeVillette does not ignore the influence of temperament, education, and personal interest on aesthetic judgments; but in treating them he constantly keeps before us his principle that one should not confuse what pleases with that which is beautiful. Referring to Hutcheson's associationism, he admits the influence of association on the imagination but considers it an evil influence. The innumerable differences noticeable between the tastes of men, he concludes, do not prove at all that there is no fixed beauty or no taste better than another.⁴⁶ They prove nothing but insensibility, ignorance, prejudice, or lack of attention—in a word, some frailty or some fault.

7. In considering merely the general outlines of Hutcheson's and DeVillette's systems, we do not find fundamental differences. Hutcheson in his system includes external senses, an internal sense or senses of beauty, and a moral sense, regarding the perceptions of the three divisions as arbitrary. External senses give us simple perceptions; internal senses enable us to perceive regularity, order, and harmony; and moral sense enables us to perceive and approve virtuous objects. DeVillette includes in his system the external senses, agreeable sentiments caused by a blending of sense and intellect in the imagination, and a moral sense or senses. He denies that the connection between physical objects and our agreeable sentiments is arbitrary, insisting that the perception of beauty is the result of intellect. Our tastes may vary concerning the beauty of physical objects, but all people agree concerning the objects which affect our moral sense. DeVillette does less to show us that Hutcheson's theory is wrong than that his

⁴⁵ *Œuvres*, p. 206.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

essay is superficial and incomplete. By means of his own thorough analyses, definitions, and descriptions, he makes us realize how little information Hutcheson actually gives us about beauty. As De Villette points out, Hutcheson makes statements without supporting or explaining them, he uses words with inexact meanings, he gives examples and observations which do not go to the heart of the subject and which create more obscurity than clarity, and he presents much material which is only remotely relevant to his subject. Nearly all his fifth section, for ex-

ample, in which he proves that the world and its creatures could not have come into being by chance, has no real place in a treatise on aesthetics.

Although the present discussion may suggest that DeVillette's treatise serves merely as a commentary on Hutcheson, this is an erroneous impression. His work has an independent value as one of the most thorough treatments of beauty and taste in the period, richer by far than has been indicated by the above consideration of particular sections.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

STRUCTURE DE SWANN COMBRAY OU LE CERCLE PARFAIT*

ROBERT VIGNERON

SUR LES principes dont il s'est inspiré pour élaborer *A la Recherche du temps perdu*, Marcel Proust s'est expliqué dans trois textes essentiels, qui se confirment, se complètent et s'éclairent l'un l'autre, et, ainsi rapprochés, constituent en quelque sorte la somme de sa philosophie esthétique: le dernier chapitre du *Temps retrouvé*, ébauché dès l'été de 1909, une lettre écrite à René Blum au début de novembre 1913, et l'interview parue le 12 novembre 1913 dans le *Temps*.²

A la base est une théorie de la con-

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¹ La formule est de Marcel Proust lui-même: cf. A Robert Dreyfus, XXXVIII, [16 mai 1908], *Correspondance générale de Marcel Proust* (Paris: Plon, 1930-1936), IV, 235.

² Cf. *Le Temps retrouvé* (Paris: Gallimard, 1927), II, 24-79, 239-61 (texte où une analyse attentive permet de discerner de nombreuses additions et interpolations postérieures à 1914); à René Blum, V, [Vers premiers jours de novembre 1913]*, *Comment parut Du Côté de chez Swann* (Paris: Kra, 1930), pp. 57-63; et Élie-Joseph Bois, « A la Recherche du temps perdu », *Temps*, Jeudi 13 (Mercredi 12 antidaté) novembre 1913, p. 4, reproduit presque intégralement par Robert Dreyfus, *Souvenirs sur Marcel Proust* (Paris: Grasset, 1926), pp. 287-92, où nous renverrons pour la commodité du lecteur. Il va sans dire que pour être complet il faudrait ajouter à ces trois documents de nombreuses remarques tirées du reste de la correspondance aussi bien que du reste de l'œuvre. Mais nous ne prétendons point ici faire un exposé complet de la philosophie de Proust, non plus qu'en indiquer les sources: nous ne renverrons donc qu'aux textes essentiels, et nous n'en retiendrons que ce qui nous semble nécessaire pour expliquer la structure d'*A la Recherche du temps perdu*. Ajoutons que Marcel Proust, qui avait accordé à Élie-Joseph Bois un entretien d'une heure et demie et lui avait « exposé mille choses », se plaignit à René Blum que son exposé eût été « terriblement mutilé »: l'interview présente en effet des lacunes et des incohérences regrettables; on y reconnaît pourtant nombre d'idées ou de formules du *Temps retrouvé*, de *Du Côté de chez Swann* et de la lettre à René Blum, ce qui d'ailleurs montre que la philosophie esthétique que l'auteur prête à son héros est bien la sienne propre.

naissance et de la mémoire.³ Notre perception consciente est une perpétuelle erreur: elle ne nous permet de l'univers que des visions incomplètes et décevantes, car elle est appauvrie par l'intelligence, qui de la réalité élimine tout ce qui ne court pas au raisonnement ou à l'action, et émoussée par l'habitude, qui assoupit nos facultés et gouverne à leur place notre vie quotidienne.⁴ Nous sommes donc impuissants à nous réaliser dans le présent, dans la jouissance directe ou l'action effective.⁵ C'est la collection de ces perceptions mensongères que conserve notre mémoire volontaire, la mémoire de notre intelligence, qui ne peut nous rendre du passé que des reproductions sans ressemblance, où nous croyons retrouver notre vie et la réalité.⁶ Mais tous les multiples et précieux éléments que l'intelligence et l'habitude écartent ou effacent de notre perception consciente, notre inconscient les recueille dans leur richesse et leur complexité originales. C'est dans ses profondeurs que la véritable réalité vient s'ensevelir; et elle risque d'y rester à jamais

³ Cf. A Louis de Robert, XII, *Comment débuta Marcel Proust* (Paris: N.R.F., 1925), p. 70.

⁴ Cf. *A l'Ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*, II, 60, 79, III, 98; *Le Côté de Guermantes*, I, 60; *Albertine disparue*, I, 9, 204, II, 32-33; *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 12. L'auteur précise que cette erreur porte non seulement sur l'univers visible et l'univers audible, mais aussi sur l'univers social, l'univers sentimental, l'univers historique, etc. Sauf indication contraire, nous renvoyons à l'édition courante d'*A la Recherche du temps perdu*, publiée à Paris chez Gallimard.

⁵ Cf. *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 22-23.

⁶ Cf. A René Blum, V, *Comment parut*, p. 60; *Interview*, *Souvenirs*, p. 289; *Du Côté de chez Swann*, I, 68; *A l'Ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*, III, 252; *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 47-48.

oubliée: n'ayant point été appréhendée par l'intelligence, elle échappe en effet aux prises de la mémoire volontaire.⁷ Mais, outre la mémoire volontaire, nous possédons une mémoire involontaire, qui est la mémoire de notre sensibilité et de notre inconscient. Elle n'obéit point à l'intelligence, et ne peut être déclanchée que par une similitude fortuite entre une sensation présente et une sensation passée: une odeur, une saveur anciennes, par hasard retrouvées et reconnues, évoquent à leur suite toutes les impressions contemporaines et nous restituent ainsi un moment inconnu de notre vie, dans toute sa complexité, dans toute sa richesse, dans toute sa vérité.⁸ Et, comme nous vivons alors la même sensation à la fois dans le passé et dans le présent, donc en dehors du temps, en nous surgit pour la goûter en une fugitive contemplation d'éternité un être extra-temporel, un être affranchi de l'ordre du temps, qui ne se nourrit que de l'essence des choses.⁹

C'est sur cette théorie de la connaissance et de la mémoire que Marcel Proust asseoit toute sa théorie de l'art.¹⁰ Si notre perception consciente de l'univers est incomplète et inexacte, ce n'est pas à elle que l'écrivain doit emprunter les matériaux de son œuvre. Marcel Proust condamne donc la littérature prétendue réaliste, qui, se contentant d'observer et de décrire le monde d'après nature et du dehors, est incapable d'atteindre à la véritable réalité.¹¹ Il condamne aussi la

littérature soi-disant vécue, qui, n'étant point fondée sur nos souvenirs véritables, n'est qu'une stérile transcription des perceptions erronées que notre mémoire volontaire a conservées et que nous prenons à tort pour notre vie.¹² Il condamne enfin la littérature intellectuelle, car, quelle que soit leur valeur, les vérités que l'intelligence saisit immédiatement en pleine lumière manquent de profondeur, parce qu'il n'y a pas eu à creuser pour les atteindre: elles n'ont qu'une vérité logique, une vérité possible, leur élection est arbitraire, et elles ne s'imposent point avec l'irrésistible nécessité du réel retrouvé.¹³

S'il est vrai que le domaine de la seule réalité pour chacun, c'est le domaine de sa propre sensibilité, si c'est en nous que notre vraie vie gît ensevelie, c'est dans les profondeurs de son inconscient que l'écrivain doit découvrir la matière première de son œuvre.¹⁴ Elle comprend d'abord des souvenirs longtemps oubliés, qui, fortuitement évoqués par l'attraction d'un moment identique, nous sont tout d'un coup restitués par la mémoire involontaire et s'imposent alors à nous avec une irrécusable authenticité, avec une infaillible proportion de lumière et d'ombre, de souvenir et d'oubli, que la mémoire ou l'observation conscientes ignoreront toujours.¹⁵ Elle comprend aussi, cette matière, certaines impressions obscures et profondes, impressions de parfum, de forme, de couleur ou de son, qui parfois sollicitent mystérieusement notre conscience et semblent laisser entrevoir quelque vérité

⁷ Cf. *Du Côté de chez Swann*, I, 69; *A l'Ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*, II, 60-61; *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 12, 14, 22-23, 33, 39.

⁸ Cf. A René Blum, V, *Comment parut*, pp. 60-61; *Interview, Souvenirs*, pp. 289-90; *Du Côté de chez Swann*, I, 69, 72, 73; *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 16.

⁹ Cf. *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 14, 16. C'est, on le voit, le phénomène psychologique de la mémoire involontaire que Proust prend pour base de sa métaphysique.

¹⁰ Cf. « A propos du style de Flaubert », *Nouvelle revue française*, 1^{er} janvier 1920, p. 89.

¹¹ Cf. *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 28, 34, 40.

¹² Cf. *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 47-48, 235-36.

¹³ Cf. *Interview, Souvenirs*, pp. 291-92; *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 24, 26, 27, 29-30, 52.

¹⁴ Cf. *Interview, Souvenirs*, p. 290; *Du Côté de chez Swann*, I, 205; *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 25, 33.

¹⁵ Cf. *Interview, Souvenirs*, pp. 290-91; *Du Côté de chez Swann*, I, 72; *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 25.

transcendante ou promettre quelque félicité supra-terrestre.¹⁶

Ces données sensibles, que sa mémoire involontaire lui a restituées, l'écrivain qui veut écrire le livre essentiel, le seul livre vrai, doit appliquer son intelligence à les approfondir, à les éclaircir, à les déchiffrer: il y retrouvera le temps perdu, sa vie, sa vraie vie enfin découverte, la seule vie par conséquent réellement vécue.¹⁷ Mais il doit en outre s'efforcer de penser ce qu'il a senti, de le convertir en un équivalent spirituel, intelligible et communicable, et de révéler ainsi à d'autres cet univers original et unique qui est le sien et qui sans l'art resterait éternellement son secret.¹⁸ Précieuses entre toutes, ces reminiscences et ces impressions élucidées et interprétées au prix d'un dur labeur sont aussi trop rares pour suffire à constituer l'œuvre d'art. Pour les enchâsser en une matière moins pure mais encore pénétrée d'esprit, l'écrivain ne doit pas dédaigner certaines vérités perçues directement par l'intelligence, certaines vérités relatives aux passions, aux caractères, aux mœurs, au Temps surtout dans lequel baignent et s'altèrent les hommes et les sociétés.¹⁹ Les matériaux de l'œuvre, tirés de la vie même de l'écrivain, ce sont donc essentiellement des données affectives, évoquées des profondeurs de l'inconscient par la mémoire involontaire, déchiffrées et traduites par l'intelligence, et insérées dans un contexte moins précieux de vérités intellectuelles. Mais à ces matériaux divers il faut encore donner une forme et imposer une ordonnance.

A vrai dire, le style est indissoluble-

ment lié à la substance: il n'est point un enjolivement superficiel, ni même une question de simple technique, mais bien, comme la couleur chez les peintres, une qualité de la vision: il est la révélation, qui serait impossible par des moyens directs et conscients, de la différence qualitative qu'il y a dans la manière dont le monde nous apparaît à chacun.²⁰ Il est aussi le témoignage du degré de profondeur auquel a été poussé le travail intellectuel et moral.²¹ Ce sont les anneaux nécessaires d'un beau style, l'image, la métaphore, l'alliance de mots qui soustraient à jamais aux contingences du temps la réalité recréée,²² et qui produisent le miracle suprême, « la transsubstantiation des qualités irrationnelles de la matière et de la vie en des mots humains ».²³

De ces épisodes de sa vie passée ainsi ressuscités et immortalisés l'écrivain ne doit point se contenter de faire un recueil de souvenirs s'enchaînant selon les lois fortuites de l'association des idées:²⁴ il lui faut les ordonner selon un plan rigoureux. Des principes de l'art de la composition, Marcel Proust ne dit rien d'explicite; mais ce qu'il admire, ce sont ces œuvres

¹⁶ Cf. Interview, *Souvenirs*, p. 292; *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 48.

¹⁷ Cf. *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 29.

¹⁸ Cf. *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 40.

¹⁹ Cf. A. Lucien Daudet, V, *Autour de soixante lettres de Marcel Proust* (Paris: Gallimard, 1925), p. 90.

²⁰ Marcel Proust devait, quelques années plus tard, protester obstinément contre l'erreur commise à cet égard par tant de critiques à courte vue; cf. à François Mauriac, I, [24 septembre 1919], *La Littéraire*, Samedi 23 mars 1946, p. 2: « C'est ce que des critiques appellent des ouvrages sans composition et écrits au hasard des souvenirs »; à Paul Souday, V, 10 novembre 1919, *Correspondance*, III, 69: « Je vois des lecteurs s'imaginer que j'écris, en me flant à d'arbitraires et fortuites associations d'idées, l'histoire de ma vie »; et « A propos du style de Flaubert », *Nouvelle revue française*, 1^{er} janvier 1920, p. 89: « Dans *Du Côté de chez Swann*, certaines personnes, même très lettrées, méconnaissant la composition rigoureuse bien que voilée... crurent que mon roman était une sorte de recueil de souvenirs, s'enchaînant selon les lois fortuites de l'association des idées ».

¹⁶ Cf. Interview, *Souvenirs*, pp. 288-89; *Du Côté de chez Swann*, I, 257-60; *A l'Ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*, II, 161-64; *La Prisonnière*, II, 79; *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 26.

¹⁷ Cf. Interview, *Souvenirs*, p. 291; *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 22, 28, 258.

¹⁸ Cf. *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 24, 49, 60, 258.

¹⁹ Cf. *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 53, 101, 150.

achevées « où il n'y a pas une seule touche qui soit isolée, où chaque partie tour à tour reçoit des autres sa raison d'être comme elle leur impose la sienne »;²⁵ et il affirme inlassablement que son ouvrage à lui est composé et concentrique, qu'il est d'une composition très sévère, mais si complexe et à si large ouverture de compas qu'elle est d'abord difficile à discerner et n'apparaît que tardivement, quand tous les thèmes ont commencé à se combiner.²⁶ Le « grand plan d'ensemble »²⁷ est simple: il est dominé par le thème de l'irrévocable écoulement du temps, rendu sensible à la fois par l'évolution des personnages et par les transformations de la société.²⁸ Il comporte à la fois l'histoire d'une vocation littéraire,²⁹ qui conduit le héros de l'enfance à la vieillesse, et l'histoire de deux mondes d'abord distincts et en apparence inconciliables et qui finissent par se confondre.³⁰ Cette double histoire, c'est le héros lui-même qui la raconte, à la première personne, comme Saint-Simon ou comme Jean-Jacques; mais elle n'a point la contingence des *Mémoires* ou des *Confessions*: la dernière page est déjà en puissance dans la première, dès le début les thèmes tendent vers leur combinaison finale, les personnages sont préparés, c'est-à-dire qu'ils apparaissent d'abord très différents de ce qu'ils se révéleront plus tard, et les moindres épisodes, même les plus oiseux en apparence, sont destinés à concourir au développement des thèmes,

à l'analyse des caractères et à la peinture des passions.³¹

Marcel Proust pousse plus loin encore le souci de la composition. Pour introduire divers groupes de souvenirs en même temps qu'en indiquer le mode d'évocation et préparer la révélation suprême, il imagine de faire appel aux formes différentes de la mémoire involontaire: « C'est un livre extrêmement réel », explique-t-il à René Blum, « mais supporté en quelque sorte, pour imiter la mémoire involontaire, ... par une [gaîne], un pédoncule de réminiscences ».³² Par « réminiscence » il entend ici, non point le souvenir évoqué, mais bien le phénomène évocateur, le déclenchement de la mémoire affective par une fortuite association d'idées. De ces réminiscences il cite en effet deux exemples: l'évocation d'une partie de sa vie par la saveur d'un morceau de madeleine trempé dans du thé, et l'évocation d'une autre partie de sa vie par les sensations du réveil. « Mais tout cela », conclut-il, « n'est que la tige du livre ».³³ Le fruit que supporte cette tige, le livre qu'il déclare réel, passionné, vivant et vrai, ce sont les scènes évoquées et les commentaires qui les éclairent.³⁴

L'œuvre ainsi conçue et organisée s'ordonne dans le temps sur deux plans dis-

²⁵ Sur ce point, voir notre « Structure de *Swann*: Prétentions et défaillances », pp. 103-4.

²⁶ A René Blum, V. *Comment parut*, pp. 60-61. La même métaphore reparait dans *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 77, à propos du rôle déterminant joué par Swann dans la vie du protagoniste: « Pédoncule un peu mince peut-être pour supporter ainsi l'étendue de toute ma vie »; cf. *ibid.*, p. 82: « N'est-ce pas à des sensations du genre de celle de la madeleine qu'est suspendue la plus belle partie des *Mémoires d'Outre-Tombe* ? »

²⁷ A René Blum, V. *Comment parut*, pp. 61-62.

²⁸ C'est Marcel Proust lui-même qui, à propos des ébats lesbiens et des profanations sadiques de Mlle Vinteuil, distingue explicitement les scènes qu'il raconte des commentaires qu'elles lui inspirent: cf. A. Louis de Robert, XIII, *Comment débuta*, p. 74: « La scène que j'ai peinte est tout excepté voluptueuse. Le commentaire qui me donne l'air d'un avocat selon vous ... c'est justement ce qui détournera de moi peut-être hélas! les cœurs sensibles, mais aussi, mais surtout les sadiques ».

²⁵ *Le Côté de Guermantes*, II, 201.

²⁶ Sur ce point, voir notre « Structure de *Swann*: Prétentions et défaillances », *Modern Philology*, November 1946, p. 103.

²⁷ *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 251.

²⁸ Cf. Interview. *Souvenirs*, pp. 287-88; *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 101, 237-38, 256.

²⁹ Cf. *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 54.

³⁰ Cette fusion est incarnée en un personnage, Mlle de Saint-Loup, à laquelle aboutissent les deux grands « côtés » de la société: cf. *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 235.

incts, et, pour ainsi dire, à deux étages différents: celui de l'action et celui du commentaire. Pour en bien comprendre l'architecture et les perspectives, il est indispensable de discerner l'essentielle dualité du personnage qui dit *je*, et qui tantôt évoque du fond du passé le protagoniste tel qu'il était au moment de l'action et tantôt représente le narrateur dans le présent, au moment où il compose son récit et tel qu'en lui-même enfin le temps incorporé et l'éternité entrevue l'ont changé.³⁵ Dès la première page, celui qui parle, ce n'est pas seulement le héros qui a aimé, qui a souffert, qui a vieilli, mais aussi l'écrivain qui a découvert sa vocation, le psychologue qui a analysé le mécanisme des passions, l'historien qui a observé l'évolution des individus et les transformations de la société, le métaphysicien qui a eu sa révélation d'éternité. C'est un homme mûr, presque un vieillard; c'est un malade, presque un mourant. Il est plein de science et de sagesse: à chaque instant il intervient, avec toute son expérience, pour interpréter en termes intellectuels et expliquer par des lois générales les phénomènes qui avaient paru obscurs à l'enfant ou au jeune homme qu'il ressuscite. Ce narrateur omniscient et lucide ne se confond point avec le protagoniste. Celui-ci, conformément à la règle appliquée à tous les personnages, évolue d'un bout à l'autre de l'œuvre, grandit, vieillit, s'instruit. A mesure qu'il passe de l'enfance à l'adolescence et à la maturité, il se montre de plus en plus capable d'analyser et d'interpréter lui-

même les sentiments qu'il éprouve et les événements auxquels il est mêlé. Au début, et notamment dans *Du Côté de chez Swann*, c'est au narrateur qu'incombe le commentaire psychologique et moral; mais ensuite, dans *Le Côté de Guermantes* et surtout dans *Le Temps retrouvé*,³⁶ l'âge, l'expérience et la sagesse du protagoniste rejoindront peu à peu l'âge, l'expérience et la sagesse du narrateur.³⁷ Les deux personnages se confondront en un Marcel unique au moment où le protagoniste, illuminé par sa révélation d'éternité, formule son esthétique et conçoit son œuvre; puis ils se dédoubleront de nouveau au moment où Marcel moribond commence à écrire, en tant que narrateur, l'œuvre qu'il vient de concevoir en tant que protagoniste.³⁸

Le résultat, c'est que, dès le premier volume, nous découvrons non pas une série de reminiscences fortuites s'accrochant les unes aux autres selon les caprices de l'association des idées, mais au contraire un récit logiquement composé, encadré d'ingénieuses introductions, de transitions bien filées et de conclusions préméditées, dans lequel l'effort littéraire, l'interprétation intellectuelle et le com-

³⁵ Par *Le Côté de Guermantes* et *Le Temps retrouvé* nous entendons ici les deuxième et troisième volumes de la trilogie annoncés en novembre 1913 au verso du faux-titre de *Du Côté de chez Swann* « pour paraître en 1914 ». On sait que *Le Côté de Guermantes* fut tiré en placards en juin 1914 dans sa version primitive; quant à la version primitive du *Temps retrouvé*, elle reste, en l'absence d'une étude critique des manuscrits, entièrement conjecturale.

³⁷ Sur le vieillissement du protagoniste, cf. *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 32, 92, 99-100.

³⁸ Rappelons à ce propos que, selon l'auteur lui-même, l'introduction et la conclusion de l'œuvre ont été écrites d'une haleine: cf. à Mme Émile Straus, LIX, [Cabourg, fin août 1909]*, *Correspondance*, VI, 116: « Je viens de commencer—et de finir—tout un long livre »; à Paul Souday, VI, 18 décembre 1919, *ibid.*, III, 72: « Le dernier chapitre du dernier volume a été écrit tout de suite après le premier chapitre du premier volume »; et à Benjamin Crémieux, II, 19 janvier 1922, *Du Côté de Marcel Proust* (Paris: Lemermet, 1929), p. 159: « La dernière page du *Temps retrouvé* (écrite avant le reste du livre) se refermera exactement sur la première ».

³⁶ Ce dédoublement d'un personnage qui dit *je* en un protagoniste et un narrateur était d'ailleurs loin d'être une nouveauté au moment où Proust en fit usage: il était courant dans les mémoires et les romans à forme autobiographique. Il suffira de rappeler, parmi les ouvrages qui lui étaient assurément familiers, les *Confessions* de Rousseau, les *Mémoires* d'Outre-Tombe de Chateaubriand, le récit de Des Grieux à l'Homme de qualité dans *Manon Lescaut*, le récit de Chactas à René dans *Atala*, et le récit de René au Père Souël dans *René*.

mentaire philosophique ordonnent, éclairent et expliquent constamment le déroulement des réminiscences affectives. En effet, d'après le plan fondamental de l'œuvre, toutes ces évocations involontaires, qui ont rendu au protagoniste des tranches entières de son passé oublié, se sont produites à des époques différentes de sa vie et selon des hasards divers, mais en tout cas avant le moment, où devenant écrivain, il entreprend son récit. Lorsque le narrateur commence d'analyser rétrospectivement, à la première page de *Du Côté de chez Swann*, les reconnaissances illusoires du réveil et les longues rêveries de l'insomnie, il a déjà eu, à la matinée Guermites, la révélation de la vocation littéraire à laquelle il obéit en se mettant à écrire. Il a découvert que la matière première de l'œuvre qu'il rêvait depuis sa lointaine adolescence, ce sont les souvenirs de sa vie passée qui lui ont été, au cours des années révolues, restitués par des phénomènes de mémoire involontaire, et aussi certaines impressions poétiques et mystérieuses qui l'ont à plusieurs reprises profondément ému. Il a aussi déterminé sa méthode et sa technique: il a arrêté que ces souvenirs et ces impressions, qu'il lui faudrait approfondir, déchiffrer et traduire en termes intellectuels et qui constitueraient l'essentiel de son œuvre, il les enchaînerait dans une armature moins précieuse de vérités de l'intelligence, d'observations psychologiques, morales, sociales et esthétiques; et il a décidé qu'à tous ces matériaux il imposerait la forme et la dimension du Temps. Il n'apparaît donc, du moins dans la version primitive, aucune incohérence dans la synthèse magistrale des épisodes de la vie du protagoniste et des commentaires du narrateur. Au moment où Bernard Grasset en commence l'impression, au printemps de 1913, *A la Recherche du temps perdu* répond encore aux intentions de Marcel

Proust. Mais l'ordonnance ne tardera pas à en être compromise: l'entêtement routinier de l'éditeur détruira bientôt l'équilibre du premier volume; la mort d'Agostinelli et les années de guerre, en ajournant la publication du second volume et en inspirant à l'auteur des transpositions inconsidérées et des interpolations massives, entraîneront ensuite l'irréparable bouleversement du reste de l'œuvre.

Le volume qui parut le 12 novembre 1913, sous le titre général de *A la Recherche du temps perdu* et le titre particulier de *Du Côté de chez Swann*, ne représentait, nous l'avons montré par ailleurs, que le premier tiers d'une œuvre d'abord proclamée indivisible, puis déclarée divisible en deux parties, et enfin débitée en trois tronçons. Il comptait 523 pages,³⁹ et renfermait lui-même trois parties. La première partie, intitulée « Combray », occupait les pages 3 à 229; la seconde, intitulée « Un Amour de Swann », les pages 231 à 468; et la troisième, intitulée « Noms de pays: le nom », les pages 469 à 523. Ces chiffres suffisent à montrer que, tandis que la première et la seconde parties s'équilibraient sensiblement (227 et 238 pages), la troisième était hors de proportion avec elles (55 pages). Mais à cette disproportion matérielle correspond une incohérence interne. Dans le cadre du volume et de l'œuvre, « Combray » et « Un Amour de Swann » constituent des épisodes achevés et en apparence distincts, dont le rapport secret ne se découvrira que plus tard; mais par contre « Noms de pays: le nom », bien que lié aux deux premières parties auxquelles il impose rétrospectivement leur raison d'être, reste inachevé et se termine sur une conclusion postiche.⁴⁰

³⁹ Dans l'édition originale (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1913) à la pagination de laquelle nous renverrons désormais.

⁴⁰ Sur la publication de *Du Côté de chez Swann* et sur les remaniements de la troisième partie, voir notre « Structure de *Swann*: Prétentions et défaillances ».

Nous avons exposé par ailleurs les circonstances qui entraînèrent l'auteur à s'écarter ainsi, bien à contre-cœur, de son dessein primitif. Nous nous proposons maintenant de dégager les articulations cachées du plan, très complexe mais très conscient, qui a déterminé l'élaboration de la première partie, « Combray », laquelle ne semble pas avoir été affectée par les amputations et les refontes de la dernière heure.⁴¹

Dans l'ensemble, « Combray » présente une ordonnance symétrique, et comporte une introduction, une transition et une conclusion, qui encadrent deux séries d'évocations d'un passé lointain et ramènent le lecteur au point de départ, la conclusion se bouclant exactement sur l'introduction.

I. INTRODUCTION (3-10)

Évoquant une époque de sa vie déjà révolue au moment où il prend la plume, l'époque où il se couchait de bonne heure, le narrateur raconte comment il lui arrivait alors parfois, après un assoupissement rapide, d'être réveillé au bout d'une demi-heure par le souci persistant de s'endormir. Pendant quelques secondes encore il poursuivait confusément les rabâchages du sommeil; puis il parvenait à distinguer son moi de l'objet de ses réflexions, il prenait conscience de l'obscurité, il se réveillait pleinement, il entendait le sifflement des trains; il regardait alors sa montre, il constatait qu'il n'était que minuit, et il s'apitoyait sur le sort du malade qui s'éveille à cette heure-là dans une chambre d'hôtel et s'aperçoit qu'il lui faudra attendre encore pendant de longues

heures le lever du jour (3-5). Ensuite il se rendormait, et ce second assoupissement était à son tour parfois interrompu de diverses façons: tantôt par de brefs réveils qui lui permettaient de mieux sentir le silence et le sommeil; tantôt par des réveils en sursaut provoqués par le désir d'échapper à quelque rêve terrifiant où ressuscitaient des terreurs enfantines depuis longtemps oubliées; tantôt enfin par le paroxysme d'un rêve érotique qui lui avait donné l'illusion d'une présence réelle et lui laissait le désir obsédant de retrouver la fille de son rêve. Puis, de nouveau, il retombait dans le sommeil (5-6).

Ces confidences sur ses réveils d'autrefois conduisent le narrateur à des considérations psychologiques sur le sommeil et sur le problème de la reconnaissance du temps et du lieu lors du réveil. Il commence par des observations d'ordre général. Normalement, on reconnaît en s'éveillant le temps et le lieu; mais certains désordres sont possibles. Par exemple, un homme qui s'éveille dans une posture trop différente de sa posture habituelle ne sait plus l'heure qu'il est et estime qu'il vient à peine de se coucher; un homme qui s'éveille dans une posture tout à fait inusitée se croit couché quelques mois plus tôt dans une autre contrée (6). Mais, dans le cas particulier du protagoniste, il en fallait moins encore pour provoquer un bouleversement complet. Il lui suffisait d'avoir dormi profondément pour en être réduit en s'éveillant au milieu de la nuit au simple sentiment animal de l'existence; mais le souvenir de quelques uns des lieux qu'il avait habités autrefois l'aidait peu à peu à recomposer les traits originaux de son moi (6-7). Peut-être le monde extérieur est-il en perpétuel devenir, et n'est-il qu'en apparence immobilisé par notre pensée rationnelle. Toujours est-il qu'au protagoniste le monde ne présen-

⁴¹ L'analyse qui va suivre a été présentée le 17 mai 1944 dans la 6^e conférence de notre cours public sur Marcel Proust: *his life and his works*, fait à l'Université de Chicago sous les auspices de la Division des Humanités. Signalons que dans cette analyse nous nous sommes attaché avant tout à dégager et à suivre le fil du récit, en laissant pour le moment de côté la question des commentaires et de la composition thématique.

taît alors au réveil qu'un aspect tournoyant et confus. C'était d'abord la mémoire de son corps, la mémoire de ses membres, qui cherchait à l'orienter en lui présentant successivement, à titre d'hypothèses, plusieurs des chambres où il avait autrefois dormi; et avant même que sa pensée consciente eût pu identifier le logis, son corps avait cru, d'après la place des meubles, des portes et des fenêtres, se retrouver dans telle ou telle chambre familière (7). Son côté ankylosé croyait reconnaître la chambre de Combray, chez ses grands-parents, en des jours lointains (7-8). Puis tout à coup le souvenir d'une autre attitude proposait une nouvelle hypothèse: le protagoniste se croyait dans sa chambre de Tansonville, chez Mme de Saint-Loup, à une époque beaucoup plus récente, bien des années après les lointaines vacances de Combray (8).⁴²

Ces illusoirs reconnaissances du réveil ne duraient jamais que quelques secondes, mais elles avaient pour conséquence de déclencher l'évocation des souvenirs d'autrefois: « J'avais revu tantôt l'une, tantôt l'autre des chambres que j'avais habitées dans ma vie, et je finissais par me les rappeler toutes dans les longues rêveries qui suivaient mon réveil » (8). C'est par cette phrase, clé de tout l'ouvrage, que le narrateur introduit l'énumération des chambres qu'il se rappelait ainsi le plus fréquemment: les chambres d'hiver (cham-

bres de Paris), où l'on se blottit frileusement dans son lit; les chambres d'été (chambres de Combray), baignées d'air tiède et de clair de lune; la chambre Louis XVI (chambre de Doncières), où dès le premier soir le protagoniste n'avait pas été trop malheureux; la chambre pyramidale (chambre de Balbec), qui lui avait d'abord été si hostile, mais à laquelle il finit par s'adapter grâce à l'habitude, toute puissante sur notre esprit (8-10). C'est la matière même de son œuvre que l'auteur annonce ainsi, très ingénieusement: cette matière consistera essentiellement en tous les souvenirs associés aux diverses chambres que le protagoniste a successivement habitées dans sa vie, souvenirs évoqués, bien longtemps après les événements, au cours des longues rêveries nocturnes déclanchées par les tournoyantes et confuses illusions du réveil. Le dernier paragraphe de cette introduction est plus révélateur encore: « Certes, j'étais bien éveillé maintenant, mon corps avait viré une dernière fois et le bon ange de la certitude avait tout arrêté autour de moi, m'avait couché sous mes couvertures, dans ma chambre, et avait mis approximativement à leur place dans l'obscurité ma commode, mon bureau, ma cheminée, la fenêtre sur la rue et les deux portes. Mais j'avais beau savoir que je n'étais pas dans les demeures dont l'ignorance du réveil m'avait en un instant sinon présenté l'image distincte, du moins fait croire la présence possible, le branle était donné à ma mémoire; généralement je ne cherchais pas à me rendormir tout de suite; je passais la plus grande partie de la nuit à me rappeler notre vie d'autrefois, à Combray chez ma grand'tante, à Balbec, à Paris, à Venise, ailleurs encore, à me rappeler les lieux, les personnes que j'y avais connues, ce que j'avais vu d'elles, ce qu'on m'en avait raconté » (10).

⁴² On distingue ici très clairement quelques unes des perspectives chronologiques de l'œuvre dans la version de 1913: le moment où le narrateur écrit; l'époque où le protagoniste se couchait de bonne heure; l'époque de ses séjours à Tansonville chez Mme de Saint-Loup; et enfin l'époque de ses vacances à Combray chez ses grands-parents. Rappelons que Lucien Daudet crut, en lisant les épreuves, que les mots « à Tansonville, chez Mme de Saint-Loup » étaient une inadvertance; mais Marcel Proust le détrompa; cf. à Lucien Daudet, II, *Autour de soixante lettres*, pp. 71-72: « Ce n'est pas une erreur si dans le 1^{er} chapitre, à la 2^e ou 3^e page, vous avez lu: « Suis-je à Tansonville chez Mme de Saint-Loup? » alors que Tansonville appartient à Swann; mais c'est que dans le 3^e volume Mlle Swann épouse Robert de Saint-Loup que vous connaîtrez dans le second volume ».

⁴³ C'est ce que venait de dire le directeur Robert, qui peut-être le qu'un mon comment il de trouver entre les m

Rien de plus clair pour qui sait lire.

Nous avons ici en quelques lignes le programme de tout le roman, ou du moins l'énumération des divers décors où s'en dérouleront les principaux épisodes: Combray, Balbec, Paris, Doncières, Venise; et nous sommes prévenus que les souvenirs qui seront évoqués par le narrateur seront de deux sortes: des souvenirs d'actions, d'impressions et d'observations personnelles du protagoniste, et des souvenirs de récits recueillis par le protagoniste de la bouche de tierces personnes.⁴³

Dans la masse de ses réminiscences de Combray, le narrateur distingue deux groupes de souvenirs, différents par leur objet et différents par la manière dont ils ont été d'abord restitués à sa conscience.

II. SOUVENIRS DE COMBRAY: LE THÉÂTRE ET LE DRAME DU COUCHER (10-53)

Le premier groupe comprend des souvenirs évoqués, comme l'annonçait l'introduction, par les reconnaissances illusoire du réveil, et se rattachant directement à la chambre de Combray, où le lecteur est introduit dès la première phrase: « A Combray, tous les jours, dès la fin de l'après-midi, longtemps avant le moment où il faudrait me mettre au lit et rester, sans dormir, loin de ma mère et de ma grand'mère, ma chambre à coucher devenait le point fixe et douloureux de mes préoccupations » (10). Évoquant d'abord les soirées habituelles, puis aboutissant au récit d'une soirée particulière, ces souvenirs s'ordonnent selon un plan rationnel, qu'encombrent cependant quelques digressions.

⁴³ C'est à propos de cette introduction, dont il venait de lire la dactylographie, que M. Humblot, directeur de la librairie Ollendorff, écrivit à Louis de Robert, *Comment débuta*, p. 13: « Cher ami, je suis peut-être bouché à l'émeri, mais je ne puis comprendre qu'un monsieur puisse employer trente pages à décrire comment il se tourne et se retourne dans son lit avant de trouver le sommeil. J'ai beau me prendre la tête entre les mains, etc. ».

A. SOIRÉES HABITUELLES (10-25)

Pour distraire le jeune Marcel de l'angoisse qui l'obsédait dès la fin de l'après-midi, on lui faisait dans sa chambre, en attendant le dîner, des projections avec une lanterne magique, qui montrait l'histoire de Golo et de Geneviève de Brabant; et les crimes de Golo l'incitaient à examiner avec plus de scrupules sa propre conscience (10-12). Mais, après le dîner, il était bien obligé de quitter sa mère, qui restait à causer avec les autres, au jardin s'il faisait beau, dans le petit salon s'il faisait mauvais; quant à sa grand'mère, qui avait horreur de rester enfermée, elle continuait à se promener au jardin: sa grand'mère, dont les deux grandes inquiétudes étaient les écarts de régime de son mari, et le manque de volonté et la santé délicate de son petit-fils (13-15). La seule consolation de Marcel, quand il montait se coucher, était que sa mère viendrait l'embrasser dans son lit; mais l'attente même de ce moment si désiré était pleine de tourments et d'angoisses (15-16). Malgré tout ces soirs-là, où sa mère restait si peu de temps dans sa chambre, étaient doux encore auprès de ceux où il y avait du monde à dîner et où, à cause de cela, elle ne montait pas lui dire bonsoir (16). Le monde se bornait habituellement à M. Swann, qui parfois venait dîner en voisin, parfois arrivait à l'improviste après dîner pour causer au jardin. Les soirs où il venait ainsi après dîner, il s'annonçait timidement par le tintement de la clochette de la porte du jardin (16-17). Quoique beaucoup plus jeune que lui, Swann était très lié avec le grand-père de Marcel, qui avait été un grand ami de son père, lequel était agent de change (17-19). Pourtant, pendant des années, ni les grands-parents ni la grand'tante de l'enfant ne soupçonnèrent que Swann, évadé de l'honorable caste des agents de change, était « un des membres les plus

élégants du Jockey-Club, ami préféré du comte de Paris et du prince de Galles, un des hommes les plus choyés de la haute société du Faubourg-Saint-Germain ». Aussi, à Combray comme à Paris, le traitait-on assez cavalièrement (19-24). Mais un jour la grand'mère fut très étonnée quand une de ses anciennes amies de couvent, la marquise de Villeparisis, de la célèbre famille de Bouillon, lui apprit que Swann était un grand ami de ses neveux des Laumes : ce qui sembla incroyable à la famille, et eut pour effet d'abaisser Mme de Villeparisis dans l'esprit de la grand'tante. L'incrédulité de la famille fut ensuite confirmée par le mariage de Swann avec une femme de la pire société (24-25).

B. SOIRÉE PARTICULIÈRE (25-53)

Après ces généralités, le narrateur passe au récit d'une soirée particulière, qui fut marquée par la première abdication des parents du jeune Marcel devant son nervosisme. Le grand-père lut un jour dans un journal que Swann était un des familiers du duc de X..., dont le père et l'oncle avaient été fort en vue sous Louis-Philippe; et, comme Swann devait venir dîner un soir prochain, il se proposa de l'interroger à leur sujet; idée que blâmèrent également la grand'tante et les deux tantes Flora et Céline, sœurs de la grand'mère (25-27). L'avant-veille du dîner, le *Figaro* parla d'un tableau de la collection de M. Swann, ce dont les deux tantes se proposèrent de féliciter leur voisin, avec leur ingéniosité habituelle (27-28). Quant au protagoniste, la venue de Swann était pour lui l'objet d'une préoccupation douloureuse, car les soirs où il y avait des invités on l'envoyait se coucher de bonne heure et sa mère ne montait pas dans sa chambre (28). Toute la famille était au jardin quand retentirent les deux coups hésitants de la clochette; et ce soir-là on

envoya l'enfant se coucher avant même que le dîner fût sonné, et il ne put embrasser sa mère (28-33). Il monta à contre-cœur l'escalier détesté; et, avant de se coucher, dans un mouvement de révolte, il envoya la vieille bonne Françoise porter à sa mère un message urgent. Mais sa mère ne vint point, et lui fit dire qu'il n'y avait pas de réponse. Il prit alors la résolution désespérée d'attendre qu'elle montât se coucher pour aller l'embrasser coûte que coûte, au risque des pires châtiements (33-41). Il entendit enfin partir Swann, il entendit monter sa mère, et il courut dans le corridor se jeter dans ses bras. Elle le regarda avec une colère muette, et elle se préparait à le renvoyer sans un mot dans sa chambre, quand le père survint. Contre toute attente, il ne se fâcha pas, et il engagea même la mère à aller passer la nuit « avec le petit ». Ce fut la première abdication, lourde de conséquences, des parents devant le nervosisme de l'enfant (41-48). Pour calmer Marcel, maintenant plein de remords, la mère alla chercher les livres que la grand'mère lui avait achetés pour sa fête, entre autres *François le Champi* de George Sand, et, s'asseyant auprès de son lit, elle lui fit la lecture. Ses remords calmés, il s'abandonna à la douceur de cette nuit, tout en comprenant bien qu'elle ne pourrait se renouveler, que le lendemain ses angoisses reprendraient et que sa mère ne resterait pas encore avec lui (48-53).

III. TRANSITION: LA MÉMOIRE ET LA CONNAISSANCE (53-58)

Le narrateur interrompt à ce point son récit pour présenter quelques considérations psychologiques. Il remarque que, pendant longtemps, quand réveillé la nuit il se ressouvenait de Combray, il n'en a jamais revu qu'un pan tronqué, limité au vestibule, à l'escalier et à sa chambre,

c'est-à-dire au décor du drame de son coucher. Le reste ne lui eût été rappelé que par un effort de sa mémoire volontaire, et la mémoire volontaire est incapable de ressusciter le passé; il considérerait donc tout ce reste de Combray comme à jamais mort pour lui (53-54). Mais il se trompait; car, outre la mémoire volontaire, il y a la mémoire involontaire qui, indépendamment de tout effort conscient de notre part, est capable d'évoquer notre passé véritable, caché hors du domaine et de la portée de l'intelligence: que des souvenirs qui semblaient oubliés soient ressuscités, cela dépend du hasard, du hasard d'une association d'idées déclanchée à l'improviste par la rencontre de quelque objet matériel en qui notre passé est caché (54). Pour illustrer cette théorie, le narrateur raconte l'épisode de la petite madeleine (54-58). Depuis bien des années, tout ce qui de Combray n'était pas le théâtre et le drame de son coucher n'existait plus pour le protagoniste, quand un jour, par suite d'un concours de circonstances inusitées, sa mère réussit à lui faire accepter, contre son habitude, une tasse de thé dans laquelle il trempa un morceau de madeleine. Dès la première gorgée, il fut envahi par un plaisir délicieux, qui le métamorphosa entièrement et le fit cesser de se sentir médiocre, contingent, mortel. D'où venait donc cette puissante joie, et que signifiait-elle? Le protagoniste essaya d'abord de l'identifier expérimentalement, en répétant la cause matérielle apparente, en reprenant du thé et du gâteau; mais la sensation s'évanouit de plus en plus (54-55). Il essaya alors de l'identifier par l'introspection, en explorant son propre esprit; mais il n'obtint qu'un succès partiel et il allait renoncer à l'effort (55-57), quand tout d'un coup le souvenir lui apparut: le souvenir visuel associé au goût de la madeleine, c'était celui de la madeleine que, le dimanche matin, à Combray,

sa tante lui offrait après l'avoir trempée dans son infusion de thé ou de tilleul (57-58). Et, aussitôt ce souvenir identifié, surgirent en foule tous les autres souvenirs associés à la tante Léonie: sa chambre, sa maison, la ville, la place, les rues, les chemins, la campagne, les jardins, les bonnes gens du village: bref, tout Combray et ses environs (58).

IV. SOUVENIRS DE COMBRAY: TOUT COMBRAY ET SES ENVIRONS (58-227)

Ce second groupe de souvenirs de Combray est de beaucoup le plus long: il renferme ceux des souvenirs qui ont d'abord été évoqués par la petite madeleine, mais qui par la suite ont été ressassés avec les autres dans les longues rêveries d'après le réveil. Ces souvenirs se divisent eux-mêmes en deux séries distinctes: dans la première, le narrateur évoque les occupations ordinaires des dimanches de Combray; dans la seconde, il évoque des incidents associés aux promenades faites pendant la semaine aux environs de Combray, du côté de Méséglise et du côté de Guermantes.

A. LES DIMANCHES DE COMBRAY (58-162)

Le procédé employé dans cette section est le déroulement chronologique des occupations successives des dimanches habituels, auxquelles se rattachent par association certains souvenirs d'incidents particuliers.

Après une brève description de Combray (58-59), le narrateur nous présente la tante Léonie, et nous introduit le dimanche matin dans sa chambre, au moment où le jeune Marcel venait lui souhaiter le bonjour avant de partir pour la messe (59-62). C'est alors qu'elle lui offrait un morceau de madeleine trempé dans son infusion de thé ou de tilleul. Mais au bout de cinq minutes elle le renvoyait

se préparer pour la messe, et lui demandait de lui envoyer Françoise (62-64). Françoise, qui était depuis de longues années au service de la tante Léonie, montait alors lui donner sa pepsine, et la malade imaginaire commentait avec elle la chronique de Combray, et se demandait si Mme Goupil n'arriverait pas à la messe après l'élévation (64-72). Pendant ce temps, le protagoniste accompagnait ses parents à l'église, à la vieille et vénérable église Saint-Hilaire, dont la nef semblait occuper un espace à quatre dimensions, et dont le clocher dominait toute la ville et tous les environs (72-82). En rentrant de la messe, les Parisiens rencontraient souvent M. Legrandin, ingénieur à Paris, qui venait passer le samedi et le dimanche à sa propriété de Combray, et qui affectait des allures d'artiste ennemi de toute mondanité (82-83). A peine étaient-ils rentrés à la maison que la tante Léonie leur faisait demander si Mme Goupil était arrivée en retard à la messe. Ils n'en savaient rien, mais ils lui apprenaient qu'un peintre travaillait dans l'église à copier le vitrail de Gilbert-le-Mauvais; et la tante Léonie se mettait à attendre impatiemment le moment où Eulalie, qui venait d'ordinaire lui rendre visite le dimanche après-midi, pourrait lui donner plus amples renseignements (83-86). Françoise servait alors à ses Parisiens un déjeuner copieux et succulent, qui se prolongeait bien après midi (86-87). Puis la mère de Marcel l'envoyait prendre l'air un instant avant de lui permettre de monter lire dans sa chambre; et il allait s'asseoir dans un coin du jardin, près de l'arrière-cuisine (87-88). Autrefois il entrait alors un moment dans le cabinet de repos de l'oncle Adolphe, un frère de son grand-père, ancien militaire, qui avait pris sa retraite comme commandant; mais il avait perdu cette habitude depuis nombre d'années, depuis la brouille qu'il avait sottement provo-

quée, à Paris, entre l'oncle Adolphe et le reste de la famille (88). Une ou deux fois par mois, à Paris, on l'envoyait après déjeuner faire une visite à l'oncle Adolphe; mais un jour qu'il était sorti sous le prétexte d'aller consulter la colonne Moriss, car il avait déjà l'amour du théâtre, et qu'il s'était présenté à l'improviste chez cet oncle, qui connaissait beaucoup d'actrices, il y avait rencontré une charmante dame en rose, une cocotte chic, qui s'était montrée fort aimable pour lui (88-96). Malheureusement, malgré la promesse qu'il avait faite à son oncle de ne pas souffler mot de cette rencontre, il n'avait rien eu de plus pressé que d'en parler à ses parents, lesquels s'étaient brouillés avec l'oncle Adolphe, qui dès lors ne reparut plus à Combray (96-98). Maintenant, le protagoniste s'attardait après déjeuner près de l'arrière-cuisine, où il apercevait la fille de cuisine, pauvre fille malade dans un état de grossesse avancé, que Swann avait surnommée la Charité de Giotto et qui servait de souffredouleur à Françoise (98-101). Puis il montait lire dans sa chambre (101-2); mais sa grand-mère venait le supplier de sortir, et il allait continuer sa lecture au jardin, sous le marronnier (102-8). Quelquefois, dès le milieu de l'après-midi, il était distrait par le passage d'un régiment en manœuvres (108-10). Sauf ces jours-là, il pouvait d'ordinaire lire tranquille. Mais il fut un jour interrompu par l'arrivée de Swann tandis qu'il lisait un volume de Bergotte, un écrivain dont son ami Bloch lui avait révélé l'existence et pour qui il éprouvait la plus grande admiration (110-19). Swann lui parla de Bergotte, qui était justement un de ses familiers et un grand ami de sa fille Gilberte; et la petite Gilberte Swann prit alors aux yeux de Marcel un prestige magique du fait qu'elle connaissait Bergotte et allait avec lui visiter les vieilles villes, les cathédrales, les

châteaux (119-23). Pendant que Marcel lisait au jardin, sa tante Léonie bavardait avec Françoise en attendant l'heure d'Eulalie (123-25). Celle-ci arrivait enfin: mais presque aussitôt l'abbé Perdreau, curé de Saint-Hilaire, survenait à son tour, et, à propos du peintre qui copiait le vitrail de Gilbert-le-Mauvais, se lançait dans des explications infinies sur son église et sur l'étymologie du nom de Saint-Hilaire (125-30). Bientôt la tante Léonie se fatiguait de cette double visite, et, à peine le curé parti, elle renvoyait Eulalie sans avoir pensé à lui demander si Mme Goupil était arrivée à la messe avant l'élévation (130-33).

Ainsi passait la vie pour la tante Léonie, dans l'immuable régularité de son petit train-train. Cette monotonie fut pourtant, cette année-là, bouleversée par un accident exceptionnel, l'accouchement de la pauvre Charité de Giotto (133-35). Par ailleurs, elle était aussi modifiée régulièrement par des variations qui n'y introduisaient en somme qu'une sorte d'uniformité secondaire (135). Par exemple, chaque samedi, le déjeuner était avancé d'une heure, pour permettre à Françoise d'aller faire ses achats à Rousainville (135-37); et, les samedis du mois de mai, les Parisiens allaient après dîner au mois de Marie: c'est ainsi qu'un soir le jeune Marcel découvrit à l'église la beauté des aubépines (137-38). Au mois de Marie, ils rencontraient l'ancien professeur de piano des sœurs de la grand'mère, M. Vinteuil, et sa fille; et, à la sortie de l'église, ils causaient un moment avec eux avant de reprendre au clair de lune le chemin de la maison (138-40). Mais, malgré ces variations dans la routine de sa vie cloîtrée, la tante Léonie aspirait parfois à de grands changements, et imaginait toutes sortes de stratagèmes pour tourmenter Françoise (141-45).

Un dimanche, où le curé et Eulalie

étaient venus en même temps rendre visite à la tante Léonie, le père de Marcel voulut avant dîner consulter le conseil de famille sur l'apparente impolitesse manifestée le matin par Legrandin à la sortie de la messe (145-47). Pendant ce temps, le protagoniste descendit à la cuisine s'informer du menu du dîner. Il y découvrit un nouvel aspect du caractère de Françoise, en voyant avec quelle férocité elle insultait en l'égorgeant un poulet dont la résistance bien naturelle l'avait exaspérée (147-49). Cet incident lui ouvrit les yeux: dès lors il commença à s'apercevoir que la douceur, la componction, les vertus de Françoise cachaient des tragédies d'arrière-cuisine; et bien des années plus tard la famille devait découvrir que si, cet été-là, Françoise leur avait servi presque tous les jours des asperges, c'était parce que leur odeur donnait à la pauvre fille de cuisine chargée de les éplucher des crises d'asthme d'une telle violence qu'elle dut finir par s'en aller (149-52). Quant à Legrandin, le doute que son attitude avait inspiré au père du protagoniste fut dissipé le lendemain soir par une rencontre sur le Pont-Vieux, au cours de laquelle il se montra l'amabilité même (147). Mais, un des dimanches qui suivirent, la famille dut changer définitivement d'opinion sur lui: à la sortie de la messe, il se révéla si délibérément impoli et snob, que l'on se demanda si l'on permettrait à Marcel de se rendre à l'invitation, qu'il lui avait adressée quelques jours auparavant, d'aller dîner avec lui ce soir-là (152-55). On finit par s'y résoudre, et Legrandin se montra éloquemment et précieusement aimable; mais il trahit son snobisme par le chagrin qu'il manifesta inconsciemment de ne pas connaître les Guermentes (155-58). Après ce dîner, les relations s'espacèrent (158). Cependant, un soir que la famille le rencontra sur les bords de la Vivonne, Legrandin se mit à parler lyri-

quement de Balbec; mais, en apprenant qu'on se proposait d'y envoyer l'été suivant Marcel et sa grand'mère, il fit des efforts désespérés pour éviter de dire s'il y connaissait quelqu'un et d'avoir à donner une lettre de recommandation à la grand'mère: or le père de Marcel savait fort bien que la sœur de Legrandin, Mme de Cambremer, habitait justement à deux kilomètres de Balbec (158-62).

B. LE CÔTÉ DE MÉSÉGLISE ET LE CÔTÉ DE GUERMANTES (163-227)

Si le dimanche les Parisiens ne sortaient guère que pour se rendre à la messe, par contre les autres jours de la semaine ils allaient faire des promenades aux environs. Ce sont ces promenades que le narrateur évoque dans la seconde série des souvenirs de Combray d'abord rappelés par la petite madeleine; mais le plan qu'il suit dans cette section est topographique, et non plus chronologique; et, pour nous faire passer de la notion de temps à la notion d'espace, il imagine une ingénieuse transition.

1. TRANSITION ET INTRODUCTION (163-65)

Lorsque les Parisiens rentraient plus tard que d'ordinaire de leurs promenades, la tante Léonie s'inquiétait, à moins qu'elle ne s'avisât qu'ils avaient dû aller du côté de Guermentes (163-64). Car, nous explique le narrateur, il y avait à Combray deux côtés très différents pour les promenades: le côté de Méséglise ou côté de chez Swann, et le côté de Guermentes (164-65). Après quoi, prenant l'un après l'autre chacun de ces deux côtés, il suit l'itinéraire habituel des promenades que l'on y faisait et raconte les divers incidents ou épisodes dont le souvenir se rattache à tel ou tel point de l'itinéraire.

2. LE CÔTÉ DE MÉSÉGLISE (165-202)

Pour aller du côté de Méséglise, on quittait la maison par la grande porte qui

donnait sur la rue du Saint-Esprit, et l'on sortait de la ville par le chemin qui longeait la barrière du parc de Tansonville, la propriété de M. Swann (165-66). Un jour, par exception à l'habitude que, depuis le mariage de Swann, la famille avait prise d'éviter ce chemin, le protagoniste, son père et son grand-père prirent le raidillon qui longeait la clôture de Tansonville et montait directement aux champs. Du côté du talus, ce raidillon était bordé d'une haie d'aubépines blanche en fleurs, qui enchantait Marcel (166-70); et, de l'autre côté, à travers une haie d'aubépines roses, plus belles encore que les blanches, les promeneurs eurent la surprise d'apercevoir dans le parc une petite fille d'un blond roux, Gilberte Swann, ainsi qu'une dame en blanc, Mme Swann, et un gros monsieur avec des yeux qui lui sortaient de la tête, un certain M. de Charlus, que l'on croyait l'amant de Mme Swann (170-77). Cette année-là, la famille quitta Combray plus tôt que d'habitude, et le petit Marcel alla dire un adieu déchirant à ses chères aubépines (177). Passé le parc de Tansonville, on débouchait dans les champs, que l'on ne quittait plus pendant tout le reste de la promenade. Sur la droite, on apercevait par delà les blés les deux clochers ciselés et rustiques de Saint-André-des-Champs. A intervalles symétriques se dressaient les pommiers en fleurs. Parfois, dans le ciel de l'après-midi, la lune blanche passait, dont Marcel aimait retrouver l'image dans des tableaux et dans des livres (177-79). C'est du côté de Méséglise, à Montjouvain, que demeurait M. Vinteuil, dont la fille faisait par ses mœurs le scandale de Combray, et le désespoir de son père, lequel ne pouvait pas les ignorer tout à fait (179-83). Comme on réservait la promenade de Méséglise, plus courte, pour les temps incertains, le climat y semblait souvent pluvieux, et il fallait parfois aller

se réfugier, soit dans les bois de Rous-sainville, soit sous le porche de l'église Saint-André-des-Champs (183-86). Quelquefois même, lorsque le temps se gâtait tout à fait, il fallait rentrer et rester enfermé à la maison (186-87). Mais, l'automne qui suivit la mort de la tante Léonie, le protagoniste prit l'habitude d'aller se promener seul du côté de Méséglise, les jours de mauvais temps, enveloppé dans un grand plaid dont les rayures écossaises scandalisaient Françoise (187-89). Il éprouva au cours de ces promenades solitaires de grandes exaltations lyriques à la vue de la nature, et parfois aussi de vives jouissances sensuelles déclanchées par son désir de voir surgir devant lui une paysanne qu'il pourrait serrer dans ses bras (189-94). Quelques années plus tard, à Montjouvain, peu après la mort de M. Vinteuil, il fut par hasard témoin d'une scène lubrique entre Mlle Vinteuil et son amie, scène qui lui révéla les mœurs de Gomorrhe, et d'où découla l'idée qu'il devait par la suite se faire du sadisme (194-202).

3. LE CÔTÉ DE GUERMANTES (202-24)

Pour aller du côté de Guermantes, il fallait être sûr du temps qu'il ferait, car la promenade était longue. On sortait par la petite porte du jardin, on prenait la rue des Perchamps, la rue de l'Oiseau, le Mail, on traversait la Vivonne sur le Pont-Vieux, et l'on suivait le chemin de halage (202-7). On parvenait bientôt à un parc dont l'accès était ouvert au public, et dont le propriétaire, amateur d'horticulture aquatique, avait cultivé d'admirables bassins de nymphéas (207-8). A la sortie du parc, la rivière redevenait courante. Mais jamais les promeneurs ne remonterent jusqu'à ses sources (208-9). Jamais non plus ils ne poussèrent jusqu'à Guermantes même, où habitaient ce duc et cette duchesse de Guermantes, qui des-

cendaient de Geneviève de Brabant et que Marcel se représentait comme des personnages de vitrail ou de tapisserie (209-11). L'adolescent rêvait du parc du château, dont le Dr Percepied lui avait parlé, et il s'imaginait qu'il s'y promenait avec la duchesse, qui l'interrogeait sur ses travaux littéraires; mais, découragé, dans le sentiment qu'il avait du néant de sa pensée, il renonçait à jamais à la littérature (211-13). Un jour enfin, il eut l'occasion de voir la duchesse de Guermantes, à l'église Saint-Hilaire, lors de la messe de mariage de Mlle Percepied: elle était blonde, avec un grand nez, des yeux bleus et perçants, et un bouton au coin de la narine. Il fut déçu, car il n'avait jamais pris garde, quand il pensait à Mme de Guermantes, qu'il se la représentait, cette descendante de Geneviève de Brabant, avec les couleurs d'une tapisserie et d'un vitrail, dans un autre monde, d'une autre manière que le reste des personnes vivantes. Mais, en sortant, elle laissa tomber sur Marcel le sourire impersonnel et distrait de ses yeux de suzeraine, et aussitôt il l'aima (213-18). A partir de ce jour, dans ses promenades du côté de Guermantes, le protagoniste se sentit plus affligé encore qu'auparavant de n'avoir pas de dispositions pour les lettres et de devoir renoncer à être jamais un écrivain célèbre. Cependant, il éprouvait parfois de mystérieuses impressions devant des objets dépourvus de toute signification intellectuelle, et il se reconnaissait le devoir de conscience d'approfondir ces impressions de forme, de parfum ou de couleur; mais il n'avait pas assez de volonté pour s'imposer l'effort nécessaire et arriver à découvrir sous ces impressions la vérité qu'il pressentait (218-20). Un jour pourtant, où la promenade s'était prolongée plus que d'habitude et où le Dr Percepied avait ramené les promeneurs dans sa voiture, Marcel réussit à traduire en un petit

morceau littéraire l'impression produite sur lui par les clochers de Martinville, et il fut si heureux de ce succès qu'il se mit à chanter à tue-tête (220-23). Pendant toute la journée, au cours de ces promenades du côté de Guermantes, le protagoniste pouvait rêver au plaisir que ce serait d'être l'ami de la duchesse, de pêcher la truite et de se promener en barque avec elle sur la Vivonne; mais en rentrant à Combray il se sentait envahi de tristesse à la pensée que, comme il était de règle les jours où on était allé du côté de Guermantes et où le dîner était servi plus tard, on l'enverrait se coucher sitôt sa soupe prise; et il apprit ainsi à analyser en lui-même les états moraux successifs (223-24).

4. CONCLUSION (224-27)

Après nous avoir ainsi ramenés à l'angoisse du coucher, point de départ des souvenirs de Combray, le narrateur conclut que le côté de Méséglise et le côté de Guermantes restent pour lui liés à bien des petits événements de sa vie intellectuelle, et constituent les gisements profonds de son sol mental, les terrains résistants sur lesquels il s'appuie encore; car les choses, les êtres qu'ils lui ont fait connaître sont les seuls qu'il prenne encore au sérieux et qui lui donnent encore de la joie (224-27). Sans doute, pour avoir à jamais indissolublement uni en lui des impressions différentes rien qu'en les lui ayant fait éprouver en même temps, ils l'ont exposé par la suite à bien des déceptions et même à bien des fautes; mais par là même aussi ils donnent à certaines de ses impressions d'aujourd'hui des assises, de la profondeur, une dimension de plus qu'aux autres, et leur ajoutent un charme et une signification ineffables (227).

V. CONCLUSION GÉNÉRALE (227-29)

Pour donner une conclusion à tout « Combray », en même temps qu'un pen-

dant à l'introduction et à la transition, le narrateur nous ramène au moment où il écrit et nous rappelle explicitement les deux façons différentes dont lui ont été restitués les souvenirs qu'il vient de raconter: « C'est ainsi que je restais souvent jusqu'au matin à songer au temps de Combray, à mes tristes soirées sans sommeil, à tant de jours aussi dont l'image m'avait été plus récemment rendue par la saveur ... d'une tasse de thé ». Mais il ne se contente pas de lier ainsi étroitement la conclusion de « Combray » à l'introduction et à la transition: il veut aussi annoncer « Un Amour de Swann », et il poursuit: « ... et, par association de souvenirs, à ce que, bien des années après avoir quitté cette petite ville, j'avais appris au sujet d'un amour que Swann avait eu avant ma naissance, avec cette précision dans les détails plus facile à obtenir quelquefois pour la vie de personnes mortes il y a des siècles que pour celle de nos meilleurs amis ... » Bien plus, il tient à prévenir le lecteur qu'il pourra discerner, entre ces souvenirs d'origines diverses, des différences de matière et de facture: « Tous ces souvenirs ajoutés les uns aux autres ne formaient plus qu'une masse, mais non sans qu'on pût distinguer entre eux—entre les plus anciens et ceux, plus récents, nés d'un parfum, puis ceux qui n'étaient que les souvenirs d'une autre personne de qui je les avais appris—sinon des fissures, des failles véritables, du moins ces veinures, ces bigarrures de coloration qui, dans certaines roches, dans certains marbres, révèlent des différences d'origine, de formation » (227-28). Il revient enfin aux fantasmagories du réveil: quand approchait le matin, il y avait longtemps qu'il savait dans quelle chambre il se trouvait effectivement; ou du moins il le croyait: car à peine le jour glissait-il dans la chambre sa première raie blanche et rectificative, que la demeure rebâtie dans

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les ténèbres allait rejoindre les autres demeures illusoirees entrevues dans le tourbillon du réveil (228-29). Ainsi s'achève au lever du jour, par la reconnaissance définitive du présent et du réel, ce conte de mille et une nuits d'insomnie amorcé, à la tombée de la nuit, par le premier assoupissement et le premier réveil prématuré du protagoniste.

Qu'il y ait, dans l'introduction, la transition et la conclusion de « Combray » une ordonnance préméditée, l'analyse interne suffirait à l'indiquer; mais le témoignage de l'auteur même vient encore le confirmer. A Louis de Robert, qui lui a enfin communiqué la grossière critique de Humblot, il explique en effet dès le printemps de 1913 le rôle qu'il a consciemment assigné à l'introduction et à la conclusion de cette partie: « J'ai ... essayé d'envelopper mon premier chapitre ... dans des impressions de demi-réveil dont la signification ne sera complète que plus tard, mais que j'ai ... poussées aussi loin que ma pénétration, hélas! médiocre, l'a pu. Il est bien entendu que le but, dans ce cas, est non pas de dire qu'on se retourne dans son lit, ce qui, en effet, demande moins de pages, mais que ce n'est que le moyen de cette analyse ».⁴⁴ Et au même ami, qui sans doute en dépit de cette explication lui avait conseillé d'abréger ce début, il réplique un peu plus tard: « Pour la page 5, je ne peux pas vous obéir. Quand vous aurez fini le chapitre Combray, vous verrez qu'elle est fort importante et que les visages des chambres dans l'obscurité, commencés là et aussitôt interrompus, se terminent à la fin du chapitre ».⁴⁵

Quant à la transition, c'est dans son article « A propos du style de Flaubert »

⁴⁴ A Louis de Robert, IX, *Comment débuta*, p. 56.

⁴⁵ A Louis de Robert, X bis, *De Loti à Proust* (Paris: Flammarion, 1923), p. 166. Il est difficile de déterminer exactement à quelle page la page 5 des placards correspond dans l'édition originale.

que Marcel Proust en apporte après coup la justification. Pour confondre les critiques qui ont cru que son roman était un recueil de souvenirs s'enchaînant selon les caprices de l'association des idées et, à l'appui de cette contre-vérité, ont cité l'épisode de la petite madeleine, il explique les raisons esthétiques qui lui ont fait choisir cette sorte de transition: « Sans parler en ce moment de la valeur que je trouve à ces ressouvenirs inconscients sur lesquels j'asseois, dans le dernier volume—non encore publié—de mon œuvre, toute ma théorie de l'art, et pour m'en tenir au point de vue de la composition, j'avais simplement, pour passer d'un plan à un autre, usé non d'un fait, mais de ce que j'avais trouvé plus pur, plus précieux comme jointure, un phénomène de mémoire ».⁴⁶ Il indique même que ce raffinement technique n'est pas nouveau, et que Chateaubriand et Nerval ont employé avant lui « ce procédé de brusque transition ». Il en cite effectivement deux exemples: « Quand Chateaubriand est—si je me souviens bien—à Montboissier, il entend tout à coup chanter une grive. Et ce chant, qu'il écoutait si souvent dans sa jeunesse, le fait tout à coup revenir à Combourg, l'incite à changer, et à faire changer le lecteur avec lui, de temps et de province. De même la première partie de *Sylvie* se passe devant une scène et décrit l'amour de Gérard de Nerval pour une comédienne. Tout à coup ses yeux tombent sur une annonce: « Demain les archers de Loisy, etc. » Ces mots évoquent un souvenir, ou plutôt deux amours d'enfance: aussitôt le lieu de la nouvelle est déplacé. Ce phénomène de mémoire a servi de transition à Nerval, à ce grand génie dont presque toutes les œuvres pourraient avoir pour titre celui que j'avais donné d'abord à une des miennes: *Les*

⁴⁶ « A propos du style de Flaubert », *Nouvelle revue française*, 1^{er} janvier 1920, p. 89.

Intermittences du cœur ». ⁴⁷ C'est donc délibérément, à l'exemple de Chateaubriand et de Nerval, de bien d'autres encore peut-être, ⁴⁸ que Proust s'est servi d'un phénomène de mémoire involontaire pour passer et faire passer avec lui le lecteur du plan du Combray partiel au plan du Combray total, de tout Combray et ses environs.

Il est par conséquent hors de doute que, dans « Combray », le cercle parfait que constituent l'introduction, la transition et la conclusion, entre lesquelles viennent s'insérer deux tableaux de Combray, est un effet de l'art. Mais si l'on examine les deux groupes de souvenirs ainsi encadrés, on verra sans peine qu'entre le Combray partiel (10-53) et le Combray total (58-227) l'auteur a non moins consciemment multiplié les préparations, les reprises, les bouclages. Par exemple, Geneviève de Brabant (11) annonce les Guermantes qui en sont descendus (127-28); le petit cabinet sentant l'iris et consacré à la rêverie, aux larmes et à la volupté (15) sera rappelé à propos des exaltations sensuelles de Marcel dans les bois de Rous-sainville (193); les assiettes illustrées de sujets des *Mille et une nuits*, auxquelles il est fait allusion à propos de la grand'tante (21), s'avèreront les favorites de la tante Léonie (69-70); le grand marronnier du jardin (16) ombragera les beaux après-midi du dimanche (107); la propriété de M. Swann père (18) se reconnaîtra dans le Tansonville du fils Swann (166-67); la fille de Swann (29) reparaitra avec son

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 59-90; cf. *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 82, et, à propos de Baudelaire, II, 82-93. C'est peut-être d'un passage de *Sylvie* que Proust a tiré l'idée des rêveries évocatrices du demi-réveil; d'un passage du *Voyage en Orient*, le thème des « Noms de pays »; et d'un poème des *Petits Châteaux* en Bohême, l'amorce des « Intermittences du cœur ».

⁴⁸ En dehors de Chateaubriand, de Nerval, de Baudelaire, cités par Proust lui-même, et des autres auteurs mentionnés par les commentateurs, nous pourrions en effet citer bien des exemples de ces phénomènes de mémoire involontaire chez des auteurs vraisemblablement connus de Proust.

prénom de Gilberte (66-68, 172-75); M. Vinteuil, dont parle la tante Flora (30), fréquentera le mois de Marie (137). Bien plus, à l'intérieur même du groupe complexe des souvenirs relatifs au Combray total, l'auteur ménage de nombreuses liaisons d'un épisode à un autre. Marcel apprend un dimanche après-midi de la bouche de Swann que Mlle Swann est une grande amie de Bergotte (121), avant de l'apercevoir dans le parc de Tansonville au cours d'une promenade du côté de Méséglise (166-74). Nous sommes informés que dans la tapisserie du Couronnement d'Esther l'artiste a prêté à Esther les traits d'une dame de Guermantes (74), nous apprenons que les anciens comtes de Brabant sont les ancêtres directs du Duc et de la Duchesse de Guermantes actuels (127), et que le Gilbert-le-Mauvais du vitrail est le descendant direct de Geneviève de Brabant (128), longtemps avant que le protagoniste demande à Legrandin s'il connaît les châtelaines de Guermantes (156-58), longtemps avant qu'il soit question du côté de Guermantes (163-65) ou qu'on nous reparle des châtelains de Guermantes, de la tapisserie du Couronnement d'Esther, du vitrail de Gilbert-le-Mauvais ou de la Geneviève de Brabant de la lanterne magique (210-11), longtemps enfin avant que la Duchesse de Guermantes apparaisse en personne à la messe de mariage de la fille du Dr Percepied (213-18). M. Vinteuil nous est présenté au mois de Marie comme un brave homme d'une pudibonderie excessive, dont la seule passion est pour sa fille (137-39), et celle-ci nous est présentée comme une robuste gaillarde aux allures garçonnières (139-40), bien avant que le narrateur nous raconte, à propos de Montjouvain, qu'à partir d'une certaine année Mlle Vinteuil se montre toujours en compagnie d'une amie plus âgée qui a mauvaise réputation, que les gens du pays en font des gorges

chaudes, et que M. Vinteuil, qui ne peut tout à fait ignorer la conduite de sa fille, se meurt de chagrin (179-82). Et si le narrateur nous explique laborieusement comment, la maison de M. Vinteuil étant en contrebas d'un monticule buissonneux, le protagoniste a pu un jour, caché dans les buissons à cinquante centimètres de la fenêtre, assister à une visite de ses parents au vieux professeur de piano (138), c'est pour qu'il nous semble moins invraisemblable que le même protagoniste puisse quelques années plus tard surprendre, du même poste d'observation, les ébats lesbiens et les profanations sadiques de Mlle Vinteuil et de son amie (194-200).

On voit avec quel soin l'auteur a élaboré l'ordonnance de l'ensemble et la liaison interne des divers épisodes pour faire de « Combray » un petit monde clos où tout se réponde et s'enchaîne. Mais ce monde clos fait partie d'un plus vaste système, qu'il préfigure et détermine et dont à son tour il reçoit rétrospectivement son explication et son sens. Ces rapports de « Combray » avec « Un Amour de Swann », avec « Noms de pays: le nom », avec la fin sacrifiée du premier volume primitif et les chapitres prévus en 1913 pour *Le Côté de Guermantes* et *Le Temps retrouvé*, une lecture un peu attentive suffit à les révéler.

Ce n'est pas seulement la conclusion de « Combray » qu'annonce l'introduction: ce même pédoncule de réminiscences doit encore servir à supporter la troisième partie, « Noms de pays: le nom », qui, par delà la deuxième partie, « Un Amour de Swann », va reprendre le thème des reconnaissances illusoire du réveil et des rêveries évocatrices qu'elles déclanchent: « Parmi les chambres dont j'évoquais le plus souvent l'image dans mes nuits d'insomnie, aucune ne ressemblait moins aux chambres de Combray, saupoudrées d'une atmosphère grenue, pollinisée, comestible

et dévote, que celle du Grand-Hôtel de la Plage, à Balbec, dont les murs passés au ripolin contenaient comme les parois polies d'une piscine où l'eau bleuit, un air pur, azuré et salin » (468). En fait, toutes les parties successives de l'œuvre doivent dépendre de l'évocation d'une chambre différente, de la chambre de Combray à la chambre de Tansonville, en passant par les chambres de Balbec, de Doncières, de Paris et de Venise. L'introduction de « Combray » est donc en même temps l'introduction de *La Recherche du temps perdu* tout entière.

Il en est de même des souvenirs du Combray partiel et du Combray total, où se présentent la plupart des épisodes de la première et même de la seconde moitié de l'œuvre primitive. La remarque faite par Mme de Villeparisis à la grand'mère, que Swann est un grand ami de ses neveux des Laumes (24), prédit l'entrée en scène du prince et de la princesse des Laumes dans « Un Amour de Swann » et notamment l'apparition de la princesse Oriane chez Mme de Saint-Euverte (405-21). L'angoisse qu'éprouve le petit Marcel en se voyant privé du baiser maternel (37-38) est comparable à celle qui a été déjà le tourment de longues années de la vie de Swann (365). M. Vinteuil est un pauvre professeur de piano qui compose, mais n'ose pas faire entendre ses compositions (138-39), et Swann oublie toujours de lui demander un renseignement sur quelqu'un qui porte son nom (216): c'est qu'à Paris Swann a entendu une admirable sonate pour piano et violon d'un certain Vinteuil, qu'il croit être un parent du professeur, sans soupçonner que la vieille bête puisse être un artiste de génie (256-64, 423-33). Le M. de Charlus qui passe à Combray pour l'amant de Mme Swann (42, 122) et qui apparaît à ses côtés dans le parc de Tansonville (173-74) a été naguère le confident de Swann et le surveillant d'Odette

(387-88), ce qui n'a d'ailleurs pas empêché Swann de finir par le soupçonner lui aussi (437-39). La sœur de Legrandin, qui est mariée à un gentilhomme bas-normand, M. de Cambremer, et habite à deux kilomètres de Balbec (83, 153, 159, 162), a assisté, peu après son mariage, à la soirée chez Mme de Saint-Euverte (407, 412, 418, 422), et c'est elle que Swann, après la fin de son amour pour Odette, est allé retrouver à Combray (466-67).

D'autres indices annoncent « Noms de pays: le nom » et la fin du premier volume primitif, sacrifiée en 1913 à l'impression et recueillie en 1914 dans les trois premiers chapitres des placards du *Côté de Guermantes*: « Chez Mme Swann », « Noms de pays: le pays », et « Premiers crayons du baron de Charlus et de Robert de Saint-Loup ».⁴⁹ Françoise, à Combray, ne se doute pas qu'elle entrera un jour au service de la famille du protagoniste (64), mais nous la retrouvons à Paris, chargée d'accompagner l'adolescent aux Champs-Élysées (470). Mlle Swann, amie de Bergotte, acquiert aux yeux de Marcel un mystère et un prestige particuliers (121-23), et son prénom de Gilberte, qu'il entend à Tansonville, lui semble un talisman qui lui permettra peut-être de la retrouver un jour (173); il la retrouve en effet aux Champs-Élysées (483), elle devient sa camarade de jeux (484), et elle lui inspire une passion sans issue (485-505; *Placards 1914*, Pl. 34-40). De nombreuses allusions au mariage de Swann avec une femme de la pire société, presque une cocotte, que la famille du protagoniste refuse de voir (19, 29, 42, 122, 166), la brève apparition de la dame en blanc sous les ombrages de Tansonville (173), présagent l'entrée en scène de Mme Swann au Bois de Boulogne (512-16), la révélation qu'elle n'est autre qu'Odette

de Crécy (515), les commentaires de M. de Norpois sur son mariage et sur sa situation mondaine (Pl. 32-33), et l'introduction du protagoniste adolescent dans son salon (Pl. 36-38). La mention du goût qu'avait déjà pour le théâtre le protagoniste enfant (89-91), et plusieurs allusions à la Berma (91, 11, 482, 493), annoncent la matinée où la Berma joue *Phèdre* et qui est pour Marcel une telle déception (Pl. 29-31). La lecture d'un livre de Bergotte sous le marronnier de Combray, l'idée que l'adolescent se fait de lui d'après ses livres, la révélation de son amitié avec les Swann (110-32), préparent le déjeuner où Marcel le rencontre chez Mme Swann et le trouve tout à fait différent de ce qu'il avait imaginé (Pl. 39-41). Balbec et l'idée d'un voyage à Balbec sont mentionnés plusieurs fois incidemment (80, 83, 159-62, 192) avant d'être présentés au début de « Noms de pays: le nom » comme une des préoccupations dominantes du protagoniste (469-77), et longtemps avant que ce désir se réalise enfin par un premier séjour dans « Noms de pays: le pays » (Pl. 44-66). Mme de Villeparisis est citée en passant comme une amie de couvent de la grand'mère, ayant pour neveux les des Laumes (24) et parente de la duchesse de Guermantes (127), bien avant d'entrer en scène au Grand-Hôtel de Balbec (Pl. 51-55) et de devenir le trait d'union entre Marcel et les Guermantes (Pl. 56-61). Enfin, le M. de Charlus qui, à Tansonville, fixe sur le jeune Marcel des yeux exorbités (173), reparait à Balbec dans « Premiers crayons du baron de Charlus et de Robert de Saint-Loup » et se révèle le neveu de Mme de Villeparisis (Pl. 59-61).

Les liaisons ne sont pas moins nombreuses entre « Combray » et la seconde moitié de l'œuvre primitive, qui, selon le plan de novembre 1913, devait occuper les deux derniers chapitres du *Côté de Guermantes* et les neuf chapitres du *Temps*

⁴⁹ Sur le contenu de ces trois chapitres des *Placards 1914*, voir notre « Structure de *Swann*: Prétentions et défailances », pp. 111-22.

retrouvé. Il serait trop long de les énumérer ici : il suffira d'en indiquer les plus significatives. L'installation de la famille dans un appartement de l'hôtel de Guermantes, qui sera un fait accompli dans le chapitre « Noms de personnes : la duchesse de Guermantes », est préparée par la visite faite à Mme de Villeparisis par la grand'mère (24), qui revient enthousiasmée par le giletier Jupien et sa fille autant que par la maison, tandis qu'elle a trouvé fort commun un neveu de sa vieille amie (24-25), tous personnages destinés à jouer un rôle important dans la deuxième moitié de l'œuvre. L'amour que le protagoniste conçoit pour la Duchesse de Guermantes dès la première rencontre à Saint-Hilaire de Combray (217) s'épanouit dans le chapitre « Noms de personnes : la duchesse de Guermantes ». S'il nous est dit que M. Vinteuil trouve à l'amie de sa fille des dispositions extraordinaires pour la musique (180), qu'il laisse en mourant une œuvre inachevée et indéchiffrable, et que la mère du protagoniste, déplorant que la pauvre homme ait vécu et soit mort pour sa fille sans avoir reçu son salaire, se demande s'il le recevra après sa mort et sous quelle forme (195-96), c'est pour préparer le lecteur, dans le chapitre « M. de Charlus et les Verdurin », à la triomphante révélation du Septuor, déchiffré à force de patience, d'intelligence et de respect par l'amie de Mlle Vinteuil. La maladie et la mort de la grand'mère, qui doivent occuper le chapitre « Mort de ma grand'mère », sont pressenties dès le début de « Combray » (48), et le médecin qui ne réussira pas à la sauver est cité parmi les admirateurs de Bergotte (116, 121). Le chapitre « Les Vices et les Vertus de Padoue et de Combray » est en puissance dans les remarques sur la pauvre Charité de Giotto et les Vertus et les Vices de l'Arena (98-101), et l'insignifiante Mme Sazerat de Combray (69, 71,

73, etc.) reparaitra à Venise et rencontrera enfin Mme de Villeparisis, la femme qui naguère a consommé la ruine de son père. Dans le chapitre « Mariage de Robert de Saint-Loup », pendant un séjour à Tansonville, le Marcel qui, lors de ses promenades du côté de Guermantes, n'a jamais pu remonter jusqu'aux sources de la Vivonne ni parvenir jusqu'à Guermantes, et qui considérait les deux côtés de Méséglise et de Guermantes comme essentiellement opposés (209-10), verra les sources de la Vivonne, apprendra que Guermantes est à moins d'un quart d'heure de Tansonville, et découvrira que l'on peut aller à Guermantes en prenant par Méséglise. Le mariage de Gilberte Swann, implicitement annoncé dès le début de « Combray » (8), lui aura alors déjà prouvé que les deux côtés de la société que Méséglise et Guermantes ont si longtemps symbolisés à ses yeux ne sont pas inconciliables ; et il apprendra trop tard que le geste obscène que lui avait adressé à Tansonville la petite Gilberte (207-8, 210-11) n'était pas un signe de mépris mais une invitation au plaisir.

Parmi toutes ces liaisons si industrieusement filées entre « Combray » et les autres parties d'*A la Recherche du temps perdu*, il faut distinguer comme particulièrement importants trois épisodes : celui des ébats lesbiens de Mlle Vinteuil et de son amie, celui de la petite madeleine, et celui de la première abdication des parents devant le nervosisme de l'enfant.

Le premier, que certains lecteurs considéraient comme gratuit, Marcel Proust le déclare essentiel à l'architecture du reste de l'œuvre, car il est l'origine et l'explication de la jalousie qui plus tard tourmentera le protagoniste. « J'ai si soigneusement bâti cet ouvrage », écrit-il à ce propos en septembre 1919 à François Mauriac, « que cet épisode du premier volume est l'explication de la jalousie de

mon jeune héros dans les quatrième et cinquième volumes, de sorte qu'en arrachant la colonne au chapiteau obscène j'aurais fait plus loin tomber la voûte. » Quelques semaines plus tard, il écrit en termes presque identiques à Paul Souday : « Pour voir combien [ma composition] est rigoureuse, je n'ai qu'à me rappeler une critique de vous, mal fondée selon moi, où vous blâmiez certaines scènes troubles et inutiles de *Swann*. S'il s'agissait, dans votre esprit, d'une scène entre deux jeunes filles ... elle était, en effet, « inutile » dans le premier volume. Mais son ressouvenir est le soutien des tomes IV et V (par la jalousie qu'elle inspire, etc.). En la supprimant, je n'aurais pas changé grand-chose au premier volume; j'aurais, en revanche, par la solidarité des parties, fait tomber deux volumes entiers, dont elle est la pierre angulaire, sur la tête du lecteur ». ⁵⁰

L'épisode de la petite madeleine est plus important encore en ce qu'il ne sert pas seulement, comme celui de Mlle Vinetuil, à préparer un autre épisode de la vie du protagoniste, mais qu'il est un des pédoncules de réminiscences qui supportent toute une partie de l'ouvrage et qu'il en contient implicitement une des théories philosophiques fondamentales. Dans une lettre à Louis de Robert, Marcel Proust explique en effet dès 1913 : « C'est une chose imperceptible si vous voulez que cette saveur de thé que je ne reconnais pas d'abord et dans laquelle je retrouve les jardins de Combray. Mais ce n'est nullement un détail minutieusement observé. c'est toute une théorie de la mémoire et de la connaissance (du moins, c'est mon ambition) non promulguée directement en

termes logiques (du reste tout cela ressortira dans le troisième volume) ». ⁵¹ Il revient sur ce point en 1919 dans l'article « A propos du style de Flaubert », en indiquant incidemment la valeur qu'il trouve à ces ressouvenirs inconscients sur lesquels il asseoit, dans son dernier volume encore inédit, toute sa théorie de l'art. ⁵² Ce sont effectivement, dans le chapitre du *Temps retrouvé* qui devait s'intituler « L'Adoration perpétuelle », des phénomènes de mémoire involontaire du même genre que celui de la madeleine qui, par leur répétition, permettent au protagoniste de découvrir que la raison de la félicité qu'ils lui apportent, c'est qu'en le faisant vivre pour un instant à la fois dans le passé et dans le présent, ils libèrent en lui un être affranchi de l'ordre du temps, un être à qui les vicissitudes de la vie sont indifférentes, ses désastres inoffensifs, sa brièveté illusoire; et c'est le désir de fixer à jamais cette fugitive contemplation d'éternité qui l'amène enfin à prendre conscience de sa vocation et à concevoir son œuvre.

L'épisode de la première abdication, qui se termine par la lecture de *François le Champi* faite au protagoniste enfant par sa mère, n'est pas moins essentiel à l'ensemble de l'ouvrage, puisque c'est lui qui détermine toute la suite de la vie du protagoniste, dont le récit constituera l'œuvre qu'il conçoit, au seuil de la vieillesse, à la matinée de la princesse de Guermantes : « C'était de cette soirée, où ma mère avait abdicqué, que datait la mort lente de ma grand-mère, le déclin de ma volonté, de ma santé. Tout s'était décidé au moment où ne pouvant plus supporter d'attendre au lendemain pour poser mes lèvres sur le visage de ma mère, j'avais pris ma résolution, j'avais sauté du lit et

⁵⁰ A François Mauriac, I, [24 septembre 1919]. *Le Littéraire*, Samedi 23 mars 1946, p. 2; à Paul Souday, V, 10 novembre 1919. *Correspondance*, III, 69-70. Par les tomes IV et V, Proust entend alors les deux derniers volumes de l'édition en 5 volumes annoncée au verso du faux-titre de *Du Côté de chez Swann*, édition de la N.R.F., 1919.

⁵¹ A Louis de Robert, XII, *Comment débuta*, pp. 69-70.

⁵² « A propos du style de Flaubert », p. 89.

étais allé, en chemise de nuit, m'installer à la fenêtre par où entrait le clair de lune jusqu'à ce que j'eusse entendu partir M. Swann.⁶³ Et c'est la vue de *François le Champi*, retrouvé sur les rayons de la bibliothèque du prince de Guermantes, qui, en ressuscitant chez le vieillard l'enfant qu'il était autrefois, lui permet de reconnaître sous ses moi successifs son moi profond et permanent, et de prendre conscience du temps incorporé, lui rendant ainsi sensible le grand thème du Temps dont il imposera la forme à l'œuvre qu'il va commencer d'écrire. C'est le drame du coucher qui est le premier chaînon, c'est la matinée chez la princesse de Guermantes qui est le dernier chaînon de cette longue chaîne qui se referme sur elle-même et dont *François le Champi* est à la fois le cadenas et la clé.

Marcel Proust n'avait donc pas tort de dire que son œuvre était composée, puisque de « Combray » on peut dégager une ordonnance préméditée et symétrique, puisque dans chaque groupe de souvenirs évoqués on peut trouver et suivre le fil qui conduit intelligemment d'un épisode à l'autre. Il n'avait pas tort non plus de dire qu'elle était concentrique, puisque dans le seul « Combray » on peut discerner l'annonce des personnages qui apparaîtront et l'amorce des épisodes qui

se dérouleront dans les parties suivantes. Il n'avait pas tort enfin de dire que cette composition concentrique était d'abord difficile à percevoir parce qu'à large ouverture de compas, puisque souvent c'est après un intervalle de plusieurs parties ou même de plusieurs volumes qu'un détail en apparence gratuit trouve sa justification, qu'un épisode en apparence oiseux trouve sa suite ou son pendant. Pour qui la lit attentivement d'un bout à l'autre, *A la Recherche du temps perdu* répond vraiment à la définition formulée par l'auteur lui-même de « ces œuvres d'art achevées où il n'y a pas une seule touche qui soit isolée, où chaque partie tour à tour reçoit des autres sa raison d'être comme elle leur impose la sienne ».

Et pourtant cette patiente industrie semble parfois manquer de naturel et friser l'artifice; en dépit de toutes ces liaisons si ingénieusement suggérées ou si délibérément soulignées, des failles, des incohérences, des contradictions même serèvelent ça et là dans le récit des événements, dans la peinture des personnages, dans le développement des caractères. Une nouvelle analyse de « Combray » nous montrera en effet le caractère hétéroclite des matériaux auxquels, au prix d'un dur labeur, l'artisan a rétrospectivement imposé une illusoire unité.

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⁶³ *Le Temps retrouvé*, II, 258-59.

DISCUSSION

A NEW "READING" OF *OTHELLO*

IN AN article entitled "Character in relation to action in *Othello*" (*Modern philology*, XLIV [May, 1947], 225-37), Mr. M. E. Prior ignores not only the postulate,

The Moor is of a free and open nature
That thinks men honest that but seem to be so,

but also the supporting structure in Iago's accepted, unimpugned reputation for honesty and in Othello's "solid," heroic nature, free from a jealous bent. Are these provisions superfluous, idle? "His plays open with a postulate," says Sir Walter Raleigh of Shakespeare; as indeed most effective plays have done, *King Lear* not only with the initial situation of a time-honored *Märchen*, which is "a kind of postulate," but also, in the underplot, with the very same formula as in *Othello*:

A credulous father, and a brother noble,
Whose nature is so far from doing harms
That he suspects none [1, 2, 195-96].

These matters Mr. Prior evidently considers of no importance, and he grounds the tragedy wholly upon character and the situation. That (for him) means, pretty nearly, the character of the hero. Mr. Prior interprets less in the spirit of Aristotle when putting plot first and foremost than any other critic I remember; and he says not a word of the Moor's marriage as inherently "risky," upon which Mr. G. G. Sedgewick¹ dwells, or (on the hero's side) as too "romantic," upon which Mr. G. R. Elliott² dwells, or of Desdemona's "obstinacy" and "obtuseness," as Mr. Elliott calls it, and (like both critics) nothing of the conventional and little of the actual ascendancy of the villain. For Mr. Prior character is destiny; though, according to Raleigh (again), whose opinion he presumably respects, "It is not true to say that in these tragedies character is

destiny."³ Nevertheless, in the process, the writer must needs posit a premise of his own that the character changes in the course of the action. "Each significant incident," he says, "introduces a new element, however small, into our knowledge of the character, which enhances the probability of the episode that follows. And yet [the critic still writing, though with my italics, of 'the major figures in Shakespearean tragedy'] no new factor introduced, no action of the character however surprising, does violence to what is already known about it" (p. 225).

In drama, especially in tragedy, character does, of course, change before our eyes, and necessarily (in the three hours' traffic of the stage, with or without the observance of the unities) far more conspicuously than in the novel; but not of itself so glaringly, overwhelmingly, as here in *Othello*. For Mr. Prior's purposes the Moor changes under the urgency of Desdemona's plea for an interview with Cassio (III, 3, 45-85), which the writer strangely finds "terribly disquieting" (p. 229). That, apparently, then "enhances the probability of the episode that follows"—Othello's immediate hearkening to Iago's temptation. But what could Othello, if even now still in his senses, have expected of the "gentle" lady if not that she would actively intercede for "Michael Cassio, that came wooing with you" and, as the Moor tells Iago afterward, "went between us very oft"?⁴ And all the evidence for his disquietude as she leaves him is his outcry, to himself:

Excellent wretch! Perdition catch my soul
But I do love thee! And when I love thee not,
Chaos is come again.

³ *Shakespeare* (New York, 1907), p. 197; for the postulate see pp. 133-34.

⁴ As Grillparzer, the great Austrian dramatist, has remarked: "Ohne alle verdächtigen Nebenumstände." Why shouldn't Cassio steal away, being in disgrace? And as for the intercession, "Was ist einfacher, natürlicher, unschuldiger?"

¹ *Of irony* (Toronto, 1935), last chapter.

² "Othello as a love-tragedy," *American review*, VIII (January, 1937), 257-88.

The first two words the writer calls a "paradox," which "expresses Othello's confusion," while "the speech as a whole expresses his realization that his love for Desdemona is the new principle of order in his life and that to lose it now is to lose everything." The last words are true enough. The speech is what may be called a "defining-point" in the action; but it shows the depth of his love, not his "confusion." "Chaos is come again," as I noticed years ago,⁵ means "when I love thee not, Chaos *will* come again," as before the Creation. In *Venus and Adonis*, cited by Furness and others, there is a parallel in tense, sentiment, and situation, as the goddess cries:

For he being dead, with him is beauty slain,
And, beauty dead, black Chaos comes again [l. 1019].

Of Othello's words Kittredge says in his note, "the speech is sometimes strangely misunderstood"—as here again it is. And "excellent wretch" is (if the critic will consult Schmidt or any good glossary) not a paradox or oxymoron, "wretch" being (as Kittredge also notices) a colloquial "term of endearment," like "rogue," "villain," "thief," "monkey"—and "fool," I would add; as in Lear's "And my poor fool is hang'd."

Mr. Prior seems to be under the spell of some of the Southern "New Critics," for the Moor's suicide, too, he calls a paradox (p. 234). If ever in tragedy the death of the hero by his own hand was logical, it is here. In Renaissance tragedy, Elizabethan or Continental, the death of the hero at the end was *de rigueur*, as his marriage nearly was in comedy. There was to be a final deed or incident, a definite ending: in tragedy, justice; in comedy, satisfaction. In Renaissance tragedy, moreover, where the spirit of paganism, not of Christianity or Catholicism, prevailed, justice in such a situation is properly visited on the noble hero by himself. To die of a broken heart will do for the aged and broken Lear, but for the stalwart Othello that would be improbable, sentimental; and surely no one would have him die by the hand of another. He who has struck where he doth love—if there is a paradox in the action, is it not here: "An honourable

murderer, if you will"?—he now must strike himself. With his "solid virtue" (unless that, too, is to be discounted and the play re-written) his death is but in keeping.

What, moreover, according to Mr. Prior, has brought the Moor to this dire pass is not Iago's conventionally impenetrable hypocrisy or (except in part) his actually devilish cunning but, apparently, the simple difference between his experience with Cassio and that with Desdemona. "Had he been true to his former self, he would have followed the line of action he laid out to Iago [III, 3, 192, "Away at once with love or jealousy"]. . . . But he cannot judge Desdemona without destroying their love, and, with that destroyed, he has no order to fall back upon" (p. 232). Which, as I see it, is but begging the question. Why on such evidence—of the handkerchief Mr. Prior makes much as the "crucial issue"—why, without attempting an inquiry or bringing charges, thus judge, and condemn, and kill her? This can all be only by too "violent" a change for human nature or (without the intrusion of fate or villainy) for drama. Lodovico, newly arrived from Venice, does not share Mr. Prior's opinion as he sees the Moor give his wife a blow:

Is this the noble Moor whom our full Senate
Call all in all sufficient? Is this the nature
Whom passion could not shake, whose solid virtue
The shot of accident nor dart of chance
Could neither graze nor pierce?

"He is much chang'd," Iago coolly replies, much understating. "Another of his fathom have they none," said he at the outset, "to lead their business." As Lodovico, the Ancient, and evidently the dramatist himself see it, this "action of the character," like most of it ever since the villain sets to work—certainly "surprising"—"does violence to what is already known about it." Mr. Prior, indeed, himself has said it, though very much exaggerating: "Othello's every act becomes a parody of his true nature and, before the end, contradicts it altogether" (p. 229); "under the pressure of events the essential Othello is wholly debased and degraded" (p. 233); "the murder of Desdemona does violence to the real Othello" (p. 233); "he has destroyed himself in his act"

⁵ *Othello* (Minneapolis, 1915), p. 53.

(p. 233); "the basic virtues having been destroyed, the others, too, are meaningless" (p. 233). And, Iago apart, the explanation is, as above, but "the pressure of events." That is here given prodigious power, for which Mr. Prior in his prefatory remarks has not allowed, not allowing there, in fact, for tragedy; and, in Othello, character so changeable—how indeed could it be?—is *not* destiny.

This premise or postulate, then, does not fit the play; and that is because it is not the dramatist's own. Not only Shakespeare's plays but all the other good ones I know of, ancient or modern, as well as most other great stories, being intrinsically improbable, "open with a postulate," because only so can they become probable, with a right compactness and with the sharpest conflict (or most striking contrast) obtainable. Henry James, in his *Art of fiction*, speaks of the truth that even the novelist of our day "assumes, the premises that we must grant him." And these the drama, necessarily compact because of the limitations of time and necessarily striking because of the limitations of a throng's attention, particularly requires.

Now, as the late Mr. Granville-Barker—himself, of course, both critic and dramatist—has remarked: "A dramatist may postulate any situation he has the means to interpret if he will abide by it after." And his opinion equally applies to nondramatic poetry, as similarly expressed by Macaulay⁶ in his essay on Milton, or to imaginative prose, like Swift's in *Gulliver*, but not to the critics themselves. They should, in each case, observe and respect the postulate of the author, duly considering then whether he abides by it after. The one matter, ordinarily, they do not think of, engrossed as they are with realism; the other they would not find to their taste. They are looking, mostly, for what, unconsciously, they are bringing with them, particularly in drama, in Shakespeare; but it is not merely with him or with other drama that they take liberties, and their treatment of *The Ancient Mariner*—

⁶ *Works* (1898), VII, 8: (of poetry) "After the first suppositions have been made everything ought to be consistent; but those first suppositions require a degree of credulity. . . ." or, as Dryden said before him, "reason suffers itself to be hoodwinked that it may better enjoy the pleasures of the fiction" (*Defence of Poesy*, ad fin.).

as consistent within the warrant for its improbability as any drama of Shakespeare's—is an example in point. The late illustrious author of the *Road to Xanadu*, though he did not live to face our present-day symbolists dealing with the poem, had nevertheless the moralists and the neohumanists to confute, as in the person of the late Irving Babbitt:

The punishment, measured by the standards of a world of balanced penalties, palpably does not fit the crime. But the sphere of balanced penalties is not the given world in which the poem moves. Within *that* world, where birds have tutelary daemons and ships are driven by spectral and angelic powers, consequence and antecedent are in keeping—if for the poet's moment we accept the poet's premises.

And as he says later:

And the fallacy of such criticism as I have quoted lies in its failure to reckon with the very *donnée* of the poem—"that poetical and artistic illusion which does not aim at being confounded with reality itself."

Professor Lowes and Coleridge, like Raleigh and Macaulay and Henry James and, evidently, Shakespeare, too, knew the value and importance of a postulate. Really, as we have seen above, Mr. Prior also knows it.

The clause quoted by Lowes is from Amiel; and for the philosophy of artistic convention in general one can hardly do better than turn to another Frenchman, M. Valéry, who once was a Symbolist himself:

Mais comment assurer les ouvrages contre les retours de la réflexion, et comment les fortifier contre le sentiment de l'arbitraire?—Par l'arbitraire même, par l'arbitraire organisé et décrété. Contre les écarts personnels, contre la surabondance et la confusion, et en somme, contre la fantaisie absolue,—de sceptiques créateurs, créateurs à leur manière, ont institué le système des conventions. Les conventions sont arbitraires, ou du moins se donnent pour telles; or, il n'y a pas de scepticisme possible à l'égard des règles d'un jeu.⁷

ELMER EDGAR STOLL

MINNEAPOLIS

⁷ *Road to Xanadu* (1927), pp. 300, 301 (cf. "Symbolism in Coleridge," *PMLA*, March, 1948).

⁸ Paul Valéry, *Discours de réception à l'Académie Française* (Paris, 1927), p. 72.

BOOK REVIEWS

Mimesis: Dargestellte Wirklichkeit in der abendländischen Literatur. By ERICH AUERBACH. Bern: A. Francke Verlag, 1946. Pp. 504.

The title of the book, *Mimesis*, is taken from the Tenth Book of the *Republic*. Plato there justifies his condemnation of poetry by insisting that it is two steps removed from truth, being an "imitation" of our world, which itself is only a copy of the true reality. What writers, Auerbach asks, have indeed tried to "imitate" and to produce what we call "realism"? His history of realism in occidental literature has in mind only that realism which "combines everyday occurrences and tragic seriousness" (p. 268). Defining his subject in this way, the author necessarily treats the development of the notion of different styles: the higher, the lower, and the middle style. There has always been realism in European literature. But for the periods that insisted on the different levels of style (the classical period and again the classicistic period of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) this realism was appropriate only in comedy or in light literature of entertainment. The main features of the "realism of serious style and character" (p. 496), which should be found in a work that would deserve this classification, are, on the one hand, an awareness of the historical, social, and economic conditions of the persons represented and, on the other hand, a preference for the lower classes, i.e., the hero should be some indifferent person instead of a model man. Auerbach treats both the works in which these characteristics are present and those in which they are absent; he inquires why they are absent in a given case. He thus passes in review the literary ideals of all different times and, with them, also the different ideals of the style of life. He gives much more than merely a history of realism; he rather offers a history of the representation of man in European literature.

The method which Auerbach uses is that of style analysis. He starts each chapter with an

original passage from an author, which he analyzes, uncovering its most far-reaching aspects, often confronting it with other texts of the same period. These passages are taken from works approximately fifty to one hundred years apart throughout European literature and belonging to different nations. The author thus gives only moments of a historical development, but moments which are explored in such a way that they offer knowledge which could not be obtained by any other kind of inquiry. Auerbach feels that he has to explain the newness of his method by comparing it to that of the contemporary novelist who has "the confidence that in any section of a human life, chosen at random, at any time the whole of a human fate is present and can be represented" (p. 488). A number of modern philologists have followed this course. The Swiss periodical, *Trivium*, is doing mainly this. But I do not know any book in which a whole historical development in literature is illustrated by the exclusive use of the method of style analysis. If a justification for such a procedure is needed, Auerbach's book itself is one. The book is passionately stimulating from one end to the other. There is not one dull passage in it, since it omits all enumerations of well-known facts, such as usually encumber a history of literature. It breaks up that history, so to speak, and offers us only what is *essential*. Thus the book achieves what great literary criticism always brings about: it takes the dust away and makes the works themselves new and living to the reader. The effect of the book is increased by Auerbach's own prose—a cultured and intelligent, beautifully rich yet flexible, German, such as can rarely be found in German scholarly works of recent times.

There are, of course, dangers inherent in the exclusive use of style analysis applied to a subject which possesses a historical continuity. The author's conception of the value of traditional forces in style, even his idea of European literature itself, are somewhat vague. He starts

with an analysis of Homer, admitting himself, however, that Greek literature is outside his scope in not having a direct bearing on the further development of Western literature. But the texts that follow are some very secondary texts of the later Latin age. What is not recognized, or not admitted, is the fact that one can treat European literature as a whole, as something that represents a historical sequence, only if one looks at it in the light of Cardinal Newman's remark that the Roman Empire has not ceased to exist. But then the Latin poets of the classical age would belong at the beginning, especially Virgil and Ovid. That they are omitted is part of the 200-year-old German rebellion against the classical value of the Roman poets. Auerbach, when he interprets Homer, probably believes he has said everything that could be said about Virgil also. A similar neglect of the genuine continuity seems to me to occur in the chapters on the earlier Middle Ages, where the vernacular texts are treated as if they were absolutely isolated and not imbedded in the sequence of Latin works.

If the author had analyzed Ovid and Virgil, the "father of the Occident," as Theodor Haecker called him, one of the leading theses of the book might have been modified. In the same way as the modern realism of Stendhal and Balzac destroyed the conventions of the classicistic age, medieval realism broke the classical theories of the division of style. This medieval realism, according to Auerbach, is due directly to the example of the story of Christ, which mixes everyday reality with most sublime tragedy. This thesis does not seem to me to be proved by the book. Analyzing Virgil, he would have found the historical awareness which is one of his characteristics of realism, and he would have found in Virgil's concentration that search for truth (not representation as with Homer) which might have led Virgil's countless followers, and Dante among them, on the way to realism. In the analysis of Ovid he could have found a combination of everyday occurrences with a very pathetic reality, namely, the tragedy of the poet's personal fate (see Hermann Fränkel,

Ovid: a poet between two worlds [University of California Press, 1945]; cf. Auerbach [p. 75], where he finds that the representation of the multiplicity of the human personality as shown in a given passage of Augustine was not possible before the Christian influence, which is exactly what Fränkel claims for Ovid). If beyond this tradition of Ovid and Virgil it could be established that there was a conscious imitation of the Bible as literature (p. 91, e.g., for Gregory of Tours, this is asserted, but without any proof), then Auerbach's thesis would stand. In the beautiful chapter on Dante, for instance, the author shows clearly how Dante's style and representation of man were determined by the philosophy in which he believed; but he hardly proves the much more narrow thesis that the story of Christ led directly to this new realism.

If, however, Auerbach simply wants to say that Christianity made realism possible, then another danger inherent in the method of style analysis comes to light. The Christian realism—the depiction of man as a suffering creature, yet not losing his dignity—is due, in Auerbach's opinion, to the conception of *figura*. The word in this meaning is known to any reader of Pascal or of certain medieval texts. *Figura* is the prefiguration of Christ in many of the scenes of the Old Testament. It is the basic Christian idea that what will be in the glory, in eternity, has already happened once, even again and again, as an image, as an earthly reality. Auerbach makes this the basis of his interpretation of the medieval representation of man and his history. I do not think that this can be called a new discovery, but Auerbach seems to take it as such. He thereby shows how far removed he and his readers are already from this Christian past. He shows, indeed, the weakness of a purely aesthetic approach to something which is more than aesthetic, which has the power of resting on a belief.

These are a few among the countless ideas and insights which this great book stimulates and which are mentioned here rather as a tribute than as a criticism.

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Johnsonian gleanings, Part X: *Johnson's early life: the final narrative*. By ALEYN LYELL READE. London: Privately printed for the author, 1946. Pp. xii+224.

After forty years and after the dislocations of two great wars, Mr. Reade has prepared a summary of all his genealogical studies on the family connections of Samuel Johnson. First came *The Reades of Blackwood Hill and Dr. Johnson's ancestry*, in 1906, and then nine parts of his *Johnsonian gleanings* over the years. Now this summary in the tenth part brings all the results together but leaves the documents undisturbed in the earlier parts; still to come is an index to the whole series.

Reade is always a genealogist who loves Johnson, not a Johnsonian who dabbles in genealogy. He traces all possible or suspected family relationships in any way connected with the family of Michael Johnson. Sometimes, indeed, the connection is not very near: on page 93 Thomas Boothby is identified because in 1705 he had married Hester Skrymsher, sister to Johnson's "very near relative," Charles Skrymsher; but Johnson did not know of his connection with Boothby, and perhaps Boothby knew no more of Johnson. Similarly, on page 106 Reade finds it an extraordinary coincidence that the oft-married widow of Johnson's pupil, John Whitby, should later have married John Robins of Staffordshire, who was descended from Johnson's great-uncle; this is true genealogical fervor, because anybody not a genealogist would perhaps find the situation more extraordinary had Johnson not been distantly connected with a variety of people.

But genealogical enthusiasm is not in itself bad, and all Johnsonians have been indebted for many years to Reade's patient and accurate studies. The documented details hidden in the earlier volumes are difficult to find, at least until the index volume appears; but here in this tenth part the reader can find in a continuous narrative everything that is known of Johnson's family and friends up to 1740.

It is unfortunate that Reade on page 141 has continued Boswell's error about Johnson's translation of Crousaz. Reade has overlooked

L. F. Powell's discovery that the translation of Crousaz published by Cave in 1741 was Johnson's. But to miss one important new discovery when he is handling so great a mass of exact detail is no disgrace. The accuracy of Reade's work as a whole may, in fact, be tested by the exactness with which he differentiates the translations of Crousaz: his error comes from a misreading of evidence that confused Boswell, not from careless scholarship.

Reade knows that his volumes will never supersede Boswell; but he can take pride in knowing that Powell could not edit Boswell without referring repeatedly to the volumes of *Johnsonian gleanings*.

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Œuvres de Villon. Commentées par PIERRE MESSIAEN. 3 gravures de MARIO PRASINOS. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1946.

It is remarkable that in a period of economic crisis such a handsome edition as this volume of Villon can be brought out. M. Pierre Messiaen, who is the father of the most discussed composer in France this year, Olivier Messiaen, has prepared a highly original type of edition. It is not destined to replace the scholarly editions of Longnon-Foulet (Champion) and of Louis Thuasne (Picard). Avowedly, it is addressed to the "honnête homme," the cultivated reader who will find in it a text largely based on that of Longnon-Foulet, with a few of the corrections suggested by Thuasne. The spelling is not modernized as was that of Dimier's excellent edition published by Delagrave. M. Messiaen has omitted the *ballades* written in jargon.

Many features make this edition especially attractive and useful. There is an index of proper names and a glossary of old or difficult words. The biographical and critical introduction, divided into "life," "character," "glory," takes a view of Villon's character opposed to that of Marcel Schwob, who showed himself hostile to any religious interpretation of Villon and made the poet into a satirist. M. Messiaen

prefers to see him as the "good thief" of French poetry. The introduction is followed by a series of brief extracts from various writers on Villon: from a rather inaccurate and unjust essay of Robert Louis Stevenson; from Schwob, Gaston Paris, Pierre Champion, Thuasne; and from a poem of Cécile Sauvage.

The actual pages of Villon's text are elegantly presented. The page is divided so that

opposite the text there is a summary of each stanza, as well as linguistic and historical notes. The beauty of the typography (text in black print and commentary in red) and the facility with which the text may be studied make this edition one of the most striking that are now available.

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